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Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXVI, Issue No. 58

www.saipantribune.com | WEDNESDAY MARCH 23, 2016 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune | 75¢

CNMI commits to revive Japan market

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Reviving the Japan tourism market in the CNMI will be the focus of the current administration even as Gov. Ralph DLG Torres yesterday announced the appointment of Chris Concepcion as the new managing director of the Marianas Visitors Authority, replacing Perry Tenorio who is resigning on March 25.

» Delegation to visit Japan to 'reaffirm' ties
» Concepcion is new MVA managing director

Concepcion was announced as the incoming managing director after the board approved Tenorio's motion for Concepcion to take his place during the MVA's board meeting yesterday. Concepcion, formerly the sales account executive of Delta Air Lines' Saipan office, will officially come on board MVA on April 18.

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FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON

Chris Concepcion, third from left, will be the Marianas Visitors Authority's new managing director starting April as Perry Tenorio, fifth from left, separates with the agency on Friday. The two are seen here posing with the MVA board and Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, who has expressed his support for Concepcion and the MVA in reviving the Japan market.

Club 88 Mariana's lawsuit vs Kan Pacific dismissed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» Judge notes conflicting allegations whether transaction occurred between Kan Pacific and Imperial Pacific

Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio yesterday dismissed e-gaming facility Club 88 Mariana's claim for breach of contract against Kan Pacific Saipan Ltd., which owns Mariana Resort & Spa.

Kim-Tenorio ruled that since Saipan Entertainment LLC's lawsuit fails to plead facts to establish a claim for breach of contract, or breach of contract based on anticipatory repudiation, the court dismisses such claim against Kan Pacific without prejudice.

Dismiss without prejudice means Saipan Entertainment LLC, which owns Club 88 Mariana, may

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AS TORRES ADMINISTRATION FOCUSES ON TOURISM

Projects for other islands' enhancement being proposed

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

New and different recreational activities and tourist attractions are in the works to enhance not only Saipan, but other islands and the whole of the CNMI as a tourist destination.

In an interview with the media yesterday, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres shared some of the new projects in the works that will give added value to the CNMI.

Torres

Torres said they are focusing on ecotourism, and on top of integrated resorts, new activities are also being proposed.

One activity that is totally different, he said, is the zip line facility that is in the works. He added that he has also met with investors wanting to have bike lanes for cross-island biking.

"We are focusing now with a lot of environmental, hiking, biking," Torres said.

Torres also mentioned plans about developing ecotourism on Goat Island that would include goat hunting.

"There is a niche of tourism that would like to pay good money to hunt goats," Torres said.

Torres also said that having M/V *Luta* available for service in the CNMI will provide access to Rota and pave the way

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INSIDE

LOCAL
Alexis John Hernandez and the Saxation won gold in the 12th Tumon Bay Music Festival early this month in what could be the former's final performance with the band.

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BUSINESS
As it struggles to match the success of its big-screen iPhones, Apple is now contending that small can be beautiful, too.

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FOCUS
Dong Junming was detained several times in his Chinese homeland before he and his family fled to Bangkok in February 2015.

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Local

Leepan wants to get to the bottom of allegations vs Commerce chief

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

While he may not be perfect himself, Rep. Joseph Leepan Guerrero (R-Saipan) said yesterday he "will get to the bottom" of the allegations against Department of Commerce secretary Mark Rabauliman for an alleged abuse of authority, among others, and that he would treat the issue "equally and fairly."

"I need to understand what really transpired. I've got the victim's side of the story. I know that the victim is disappointed whether I was the one who shared this information. I wasn't the one who shared this to the media, I don't know who," Guerrero told reporters yesterday.

Mariano Salas, an enforcement officer under Commerce's Alcohol Beverage and Tobacco Control Division, has alleged harassment, bullying, racial discrimination, and abuse of authority by Rabauliman, in an incident report written last month

Guerrero

The report claims that Rabauliman demanded that Salas and other Commerce staff volunteering during Tinian Pika Festival last month use their per diem to buy cases of beer, using expletives, and allegedly making racial remarks against Salas, who is Chamorro.

Guerrero said the victim sought his audience and they sat down to speak on the issue about two weeks ago, and that he brought the issue to the attention of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres after meeting with the alleged victim.

Guerrero said he spoke to the governor to address his concerns as chairman of House Committee on Commerce and Tourism, as well as to make it aware to him that this issue concerns the Executive Branch's Cabinet.

"You need to take immediate action on this. You have to take lead on it, because this is your staff, this is one of your Cabinet members. And you need to deal with it," Guerrero said, recalling the conversation with Torres.

Guerrero said he told Salas that he needed to gather more detailed information on what really transpired.

"I want to balance it out. Because I am going to biased if I just support the victim and not the other side. You need to substantiate the chain of events. I am not saying he is lying. That never came to my mind. I just want to hear from the other side of the fence. Especially the people who were present there."

Guerrero said the governor requested the director of the Office of Personnel Management to conduct an investigation on the matter.

Guerrero said that Rabauliman, as one of recent graduates of the Pacific Century Fellows program, should conduct himself with an outstanding ethical approach.

"You are being groomed to be the next group of lawmakers and policymakers, you can't be doing the way you feel like you want to handle the event. You got to be professional in nature. I don't have any issue with Mr. Rabauliman. I just hope the best for him and the best for the victim, but we have to be mindful in our official capacity how we conduct ourselves."

"I am not saying I am perfect, I have my flaws" but the issue was affecting his committee. "I am looking into it and will get to the bottom of it and treat it equally and fairly," he added.

Senate holds hearing on new DOC commissioner

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

An emotional Georgia Muna Cabrera, the acting commissioner of the Department of Corrections, faced the Senate yesterday during a hearing on her appointment to the department's top post.

Cabrera, who was nominated to the post by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres early this month, received overwhelming support, despite her nerves, from those who spoke during a public comment period yesterday.

"This is one of those moments that I am nervous," she told senators yesterday. "Please excuse me, I am really shaking,"

Cabrera, who began her time at Corrections in 1995, said through hard work and dedication she worked her way up the ranks. Cabrera is currently ranked as captain.

"Officers and staff are the backbone of the department and I will not forget where I came from," Cabrera said.

The acting commissioner assured senators that she would do what is in the best interest of the department, the CNMI, and the Corrections inmates, saying that she asked the lord for strength and wisdom everyday to overcome obstacles.

Robert Guerrero, Department of Public Safety commissioner and the most recent Corrections commissioner, lauded Cabrera for rising through challenges, and acknowledged some of these may have been discriminated because of her sex.

No one knows the facility more than Cabrera, Guererro said. "She was mean but she was fair. I've seen firsthand how she took personal interest in the men and women of the department."

Guerrero called Cabrera "nosy" but added this was "good," and that Cabrera "knew everything that needs to be done" at the department to ensure the welfare of inmates.

Erlinda Naputi, acting Joeten Kiyu Public Library director and Cabrera's sister, shared the sacrifices Cabrera made to help their ailing grandparents, saying that her sister took a job as a cashier while in school and then went on to serve in the U.S. military, where she sent a monthly allowance to the family.

Naputi said that in 1991, with "a heavy heart" Cabrera left the military to continue to take care of her grandparents and siblings and in 1995 joined Corrections, where she rose in ranks from corrections officer 1, to corrections officer 2, to sergeant, then to lieutenant, and then captain.

"We are proud of her achievements," Naputi said.

John Manglona, of Grace Christian Church, said the inmates in Bible study asked him to show his support of Cabrera.

"She's good, she goes by the book," Manglona said, re-

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Regulators celebrate successful training seminar

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Adding more regulatory teeth to the casino industry they regulate, the Commonwealth Casino Commission completed an extensive 10-day training seminar last week

Led by gaming industry experts Dennis Amerine and Rick Hector, the Gaming Regulator Development seminar under the University of Nevada in Las Vegas issued certificates to over 40 people last week, made up of staff from the casino commission, gaming commissioners from Rota and Tinian, Department of Finance, and Best Sunshine International, Ltd.'s compliance division.

Commission executive director Edward Deleon Guerrero said in those last 10 days they only covered the "surface" of what they needed to do, and were comfortable with the outcome, calling the day a "happy occasion."

Casino owners to employees, operators, and service providers have to be vetted out and made sure they are suitable to be licensed by the commission, said commission chair Juan Sablan, in his remarks.

"It requires a lot of work and money to vet people out. The commission must also ensure the collections of gaming and other business activities are properly accounted for tax purposes and taxes are paid in a timely fashion. In addition, the commission must ensure [the casino] comply with all local and federal laws, especially money laundering."

Imperial Pacific is the exclusive casino licensee, operating under three dbas Best Sunshine International, Best Sunshine Live, and Grand Mariana, Guerrero said.

"They do have a multitude of other holdings, mostly real estate, but we'll discuss that later in a different forum," he added.

Guerrero also recognized the presence of Fr. James Balajadia, who would bless the commission's Gualo Rai Office in the grand opening ceremony that day. "We are prohibited from receiving anything of value from the regulated, because we are the regulator. So Pali, when you bless us, please bless us well to resist that temptation," Guerrero joked.

Speaking on behalf of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres who was off-island that day, Matt Guerrero, Torres' chief of staff, applauded the commission for pulling together many from different backgrounds to form a "hardworking and solid team for a single purpose of making this industry work, and making this industry regulated and safe for the community."

DENNIS B. CHAN
Velma Lore, one of the many that completed a UNLV training seminar on gaming regulations last week, accepts her training certificate from instructor Dennis Amerine during a ceremony last week.

"The governor and I have been deeply involved in this process. Just watching it grow. We've been to the building prior to them having cubicles or doors. Watching the executive director construct a table out of wood, which is a sight.

"It's really a testament to how hard the commissioners are working and how hard ever single one of the commission staff is taking this responsibility seriously and putting forth the very best effort for the entire Commonwealth," said Matt Guerrero.

Amerine, who has been in the gaming industry primarily as a regulator and on the compliance side of a gaming operator, said he has "seen both side of the fence over 35 years."

"You folks need to truly be commended on how far you have made strides in such a short period of time," said Amerine. "The complexity of this industry is like no other. You have before you certainly a lot of challenges but you also have great opportunity.

"This is going to be first time you are going to try to meld Macau-style junket operations into a U.S.-based regulatory system. It is going to be a challenge but it also going to be an opportunity for you to develop something that has never been developed before in the gaming industry."

"This was pretty much beginner but I think we could go to immediate or advanced in a hurry," added Hector. "And I think you are ready for the next stages. You guys have done great."

"Ten days ago we embarked on a journey of knowledge," said Edward Cabrera, manager of the commission's division of enforcement and investigation,

"Most of us began our journey at the commission with no knowledge or very little knowledge of the casino industry.

"We were thrown under the fire and we had to rapidly learn what was the right way to regulate…. For the most part, we did a pretty darn good job. The UNLV training we just completed opened my eyes and I am sure it has opened all yours to the magnitude the complexity, the skills, and the knowledge required to properly regulate our casino industry here in the CNMI. This responsibility may seem quite intimidating and insurmountable but the skills and knowledge we acquire will at least give us some confidence in ensuring our casino industry is properly regulated."

"We are students of this industry," said Edward Deleon Guerrero. "…Are we going to succeed? We are hoping and praying. Where we are going, we are on the right path.

"A lot of people understand that organized crime is always involved with a casino. Hopefully, we don't have to reach that point. But if it is to happen, it is to mostly likely happen in the junket operations. That's why we are looking at that very closely. We are preparing ourselves."

"The casino cannot work without the junket operations. We are too small, we are too isolated…But in the process, we have do our part that we vet the people involved, because our role here as regulators is not just to bring money in for the Commonwealth but also to protect the community from the negative side of gaming."

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HHS Region XI director visits Saipan

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A top official of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Region IX visited Saipan last week.

HHS Region Region IX Director Melissa Stafford-Jones arrived last Friday with the primary purpose of expanding her knowledge of health care services in the CNMI.

Stafford-Jones met with Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. officials and had discussions with management, medical staff, and division directors as well as key personnel from the hospital, behavioral health, and public health programs.

She also met with leaders from the NMC nursing program.

Stafford-Jones also conducted a site visit to the Kagman Community Health Center.

According to CHCC, the visit afforded them an opportunity to share their progress with systems improvements to ensure the availability of quality health care services for CNMI residents.

CHCC said it was evident from the visit and interactions with staff that Stafford Jones is committed to continued collaboration with CHCC.

"We are very grateful to Ms. Stafford-Jones for including the CNMI in her Pacific Islands' visit and to see first-hand how dedicated our staff is in pursuing the best for our patients as well as to see how health delivery becomes a challenge due to our remoteness and inequity," CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muna said.

CHCC added that the regional director provided key updates from her office including a consideration in the President's FY 2017 budget which could positively impact legacy caps for Medicaid cost-sharing and reimbursement.

Aside from visiting CHCC, Stafford-Jones also met with Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Legislative Health Committee leaders from the Senate and the House.

Stafford-Jones will also visit other Pacific islands including Guam and Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Island where she will participate in the 59th meeting of the Pacific Islands' Health Officers Association.

SENATE

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laying what the inmates told him.

Gregorio M. Sablan Jr., director of the Veterans Affairs Office and Cabrera's brother, said "this little rascal" before them served the country both in peace and in wartime.

Sablan said Cabrera would sometimes seek the advice of their father, who has since passed.

"Georgia," Sablan said, recalling their father's words, "leadership is not about titles and positions, leadership is about actions and taking care of people."

"Everything that we do," Sablan said, "we prefer our actions do the talking."

Nora Sablan, a member of Cabrera's high school graduating class, said Cabrera wouldn't have been there if she wasn't the "nosy one. "The one to ask questions, the one who does her homework," she said.

Senators also took turns applauding the acting commissioner.

Senate vice president Arnold Palacios (R-Saipan) came away impressed with the "human dimension" or human story of Cabrera, saying that he's sat through a bunch of hearings on appointments in his short time in the Senate "but I have never heard of a testimonial on the personal side of a nominee."

"I am impressed by the personal sacrifices that you made for your siblings and your family" and professional development, Palacios said.

"You have seen and done," Sen. Justo Quitugua (Ind-Saipan) also said, "[now you need to do] what needs to be seen and done in the Department of Corrections."

JAPAN

From Page 1

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres was present to express his support to the incoming managing director and his deep commitment to reviving the Japanese tourism market.

Torres said their first order of business will be to send a delegation to Japan to meet with their government, business, and tourism counterparts to reaffirm ties with the said country.

"I wanted to assure Chris as well as MVA that we are going to prioritize the Japanese market. We are going to Japan and with Chris now [at the] helm in April 18, that will be our first order of business, sit down with him and schedule our plan," Torres said.

Torres said he wanted to assure the commitment not only by saying it, but also by being present. They will also reprogram MVA funds to prioritize the Japan market. He added that he will also be meeting with the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands to see how they can allocate a certain percentage of rooms to Japanese agents.

"I wanted to assure our Japanese market that this administration is moving forward not just giving resources but assisting the new executive director on board to revamp the Japanese market," Torres said, "This is a step for all of us, not just Chris or the board, but as well as the administration. I wanted to give the administration and the new executive director the full commitment of myself."

Torres said he wants to bring back the diversified and balanced tourism industry in the CNMI.

"We are moving into a little bit [of a] different direction because our percentage, our distribution of tourists is different," he added, "We were hoping we can reach back out to the 30/30/30, 30 percent Japanese, 30 percent Chinese, and 30 percent Korean."

Torres believes in Concepcion's capability in reviving the market that has been dwindling for years.

"I believe he is one individual that knows the Japanese market more than anyone because of his affiliation with Delta Air Lines. I believe this would give us new direction, focusing a lot on reviving the Japanese market so that we will have an equal distribution of tourism," Torres said.

Concepcion shares the same view with the governor, and noted the importance of reaffirming ties with the Japanese, and CNMI's long relations with Japan.

"First and foremost, we need to reaffirm and strengthen the relations that we have with our partners in Japan. I think it's very important in the Japanese culture and the Japanese business culture," Concepcion said

"We have very long ties, historical relations with Japan. They built the economy here in the '80s and the '90s and our historical relationship goes further than that. We go back over a century with Japan," he added.

Concepcion also said that it is important to balance the industry not just through increased tourist arrivals but investors from Japan as well.

"If we stabilize the economic environment where it's profitable for Japanese companies to invest, we have some existing Japanese investors that are here, multimillion dollar investments that are here, and so it's important to sort of reaffirm our ties with those companies, as well as invite new ones to come in and invest here in the CNMI so that there's more incentive to bring in Japanese tourists if there are Japanese investors here in the CNMI," Concepcion said.

While their focus will be in the Japan market, Concepcion also said they need to maintain a strong presence in existing markets such as China, Korea, Taiwan, and Russia as well as tap in the Southeast Asian market with Philippine Airlines coming on board in June.

Aside from leaving Delta Air Lines, Concepcion will also be resigning as director of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board.

"I want to thank Chris for accepting the position. I know it's not easy to leave Delta," Torres said.

Torres also thanked Tenorio for "having the vision to be part of MVA" as well as for his services to the CNMI's tourism industry.

"Thank you Perry, *Dangkulu Na Si Yu'us Ma'ase*, for your dedication and commitment and all that you've gone through here," Torres said, "I want to thank you for your service and all the board for the amount of years you've dedicated on tourism."

MVA board chair Marian Aldan-Pierce likewise thanked Tenorio and welcomed Concepcion.

"We're very sad to Perry go. Perry has been a wonderful managing director and Chris has big shoes to fill. Perry has led MVA through very, very tough times and the board has been very lucky to have had someone like Perry," Pierce said.

"We're very excited to have Chris here, he's young, he's very articulate, very well respected within the community, [he] certainly will bring new energy to the board and we're all looking forward to working with Chris," she added.

After 21 years of service, Tenorio will be separating with MVA on Friday. MVA deputy managing director Judy Torres will serve as acting managing director beginning Tenorio's departure and until Concepcion comes on board on April 18.

CLUB 88

From Page 1

re-file the claim in the future.

In granting Kan Pacific's motion to dismiss, Kim-Tenorio said she is not persuaded that Kan Pacific met their burden in moving to dismiss the entire first amended complaint filed by Saipan Entertainment and thus, she declines to do so.

Kim-Tenorio granted all defendants in this lawsuit an additional two weeks from yesterday to file their answer to the first amended complaint.

The judge found that Saipan Entertainment's amended complaint pleads conflicting allegations as to whether a transaction between Kan Pacific and Imperial Pacific International occurred.

Kim-Tenorio pointed out that assuming that said transaction occurred, the remaining allegations as to breach and damages were conclusory, based on future events, or not included in the complaint.

Kim-Tenorio also stated that the court was not persuaded by Saipan Entertainment's argument for anticipatory repudiation as Saipan Entertainment failed to allege how Kan Pacific's statements or actions amounted to an unequivocal breach.

The judge pointed out that Saipan Entertainment's complaint fails to plead how Kan Pacific's statements and/or actions amounted to a repudiation.

Thus, Kim-Tenorio said, the complaint failed to establish sufficient facts to show that Kan Pacific's actions amount to an anticipatory breach of the sublease.

On Dec. 18, 2013, without Department of Public Land's consent, Kan Pacific subleased 3,500 square feet of thee Mariana Resort and Spa's property to Saipan Entertainment for its Club 88 Mariana. Club 88 Mariana began operations in November 2015.

Saipan Entertainment sued Kan Pacific, Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC, which is doing business as Best Sunshine International, for allegedly not informing the company of Best Sunshine's negotiation to purchase the resort. DPL Secretary Marianne C. Teregeyo was also named as co-defendant.

Saipan Entertainment sued Kan Pacific for breach of contract, unjust enrichment, and fraudulent nondisclosure.

Saipan Entertainment sued DPL and Teregeyo in order to enjoin the CNMI government from consenting to any assignment of the resort lease or the resort property until the controversy surrounding the validity of the resort lease is resolved.

Saipan Entertainment sued Imperial Pacific for intentional interference with contract.

Kan Pacific, through counsel Joseph J. Iacopino, then moved to dismiss the lawsuit, arguing that, Saipan Entertainment failed to allege facts to establish breach and damages.

In Saipan Entertainment's opposition to the motion to dismiss, attorney Daniel Guidotti argued that the complaint establishes sufficient facts to show that Kan Pacific's actions amount to an anticipatory breach of the sublease.

Kim-Tenorio heard the motion last March 14 and placed the matter under advisement.

In her nine-page order yesterday, Kim-Tenorio ruled that the complaint failed to state a claim for breach of contract and failed to state a claim for anticipatory repudiation.

PROJECTS

From Page 1

for its enhancement.

"Just the fact that we have MV *Luta* be part of the availability of shipping, and this is a cargo ship, you can bring a lot of equipment, materials to start revitalization on Rota. This will also open up, I believe, tourism up north, in the Northern Islands," Torres said.

He added that they are also talking to Guam for a cruise liner to travel to Pagan.

Incoming Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Chris Concepcion said that adding new recreational activities is among their goals.

"I think that's one of our goals, to increase the amount of attraction in the CNMI so that it entices more tourists to come," Concepcion said.

He added that the casino is already an added attraction and will help in increasing tourists including Japan.

"I think with the temporary casino and the full casino coming on board, it think that's an added attraction, I think there's a market out there for it including Japan. I think there's a niche market out there that is interested in gambling," Concepcion said.

FOR VIOLATING PROBATION

Ex-Sports & Rec official gets 18-month prison term

»Ex-gov, senators ask for leniency

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Former Division of Sports and Recreation deputy director John Benavente Reyes Jr. was slapped yesterday with an 18-month prison term for violating his probation in connection with his 2012 criminal case conviction.

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman sentenced the 38-year-old Reyes to two years imprisonment, all suspended except for 18 months, for probation violation.

The defendant was allowed to start serving the prison term at the Department of Corrections on Monday.

Wiseman said after serving the prison term, Reyes will be placed on six months of probation.

Wiseman said although he was persuaded in the past by the parties that Reyes was a good risk for a suspended sentence and probation, the defendant has continually shown a blatant disregard for the court's orders and terms and conditions of probation.

The judge said this included, among other things, not complying with a house arrest previously ordered.

Wiseman said in its submission, the Office of the Attorney General states that Reyes is essentially mocking the court by disobeying every order it has made.

Wiseman said the court must make it clear that defendants cannot treat court orders as mere suggestions.

"Probation was not a suggestion. House arrest was not a suggestion. Rehabilitation was not a suggestion," Wiseman said.

The judge said following the law is not a suggestion and that Reyes deserves two years for failing to follow the law on a consistent basis.

Wiseman said he finds it difficult to disagree with the government's statement and finds their recommendation of the maximum sentence of two years warranted in this case.

However, Wiseman pointed out, he does find mitigating circumstances, such as the support letters of prominent members of the community and defendant's remorseful statement.

Among those who wrote letters to the court, requesting for lenient sentence on Reyes were former governor Juan N. Babauta and Sens. Arnold I. Palacios (R-Saipan), Justo Quitugua (Ind-Saipan), and Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota).

The judge noted Reyes' several prior criminal convictions.

Wiseman said Reyes has a terrible and egregious history before the court notwithstanding the fact that he has received what could be considered some very lenient and accommodating sentences in view of the repeated violations of law.

Reyes wrote a letter to Wiseman, begging for lenient sentence.

"I want to put my life back together and I ask that you help me in doing this," the defendant told Wiseman.

Reyes admitted that he has a drug problem.

"But most of all in my heart, I want to change," he said.

Assistant public defender Michael Sato, counsel for the defendant, recommended a suspended sentence and for Reyes to continue on supervised probation, with condition that he be re-enrolled into the Lighthouse Recovery Program in Guam.

"Mr. Reyes is a drug addict and he does not belong in prison. He belongs in a clinic," Sato said.

Assistant attorney general Emily Cohen recommended the maximum sentence of two years imprisonment.

Cohen said Reyes has been given every opportunity to seek help, and he has turned it down.

"At this point, he should spend significant time in the Department of Corrections to show him that repeated ice use in the CNMI will not be tolerated," the prosecutor said.

Last year, Reyes was sentenced to four months imprisonment for pleading guilty to his two criminal cases and admitting to violating his probation.

The defendant pleaded guilty to the offense of illegal possession of controlled substance in the 2014 case and pleaded guilty to the offenses of illegal possession of controlled substance and contempt of court in the 2015 criminal case.

He conceded to have violated his probation in the 2012 criminal conviction. His sentencing yesterday was with this violation probation.

According to the factual basis of the plea agreement, on Sept. 25, 2014, and on Jan. 30, 2015, on Saipan, Reyes had "ice" in his possession.

Reyes admitted to violating the terms and conditions of his probation by failing to obey all laws when he was arrested for possession of "ice" on Sept. 25, 2014, Oct. 10, 2014, Jan. 30, 2015, and April 29, 2015, and has not paid his fine or court fees.

The government agreed to dismiss in its entirety defendant's other criminal case in 2014. The prosecution also agreed not to file charges against the defendant in another police criminal case in 2015.

In November 2013, Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo sentenced Reyes to three months in prison for shattering the driver's side of a car with a baseball bat and assaulting the driver, Derek Reyes, at a stop light on Beach Road, Garapan on Sept. 2, 2012.

According to court documents, the defendant assaulted the driver upon seeing his former girlfriend in the car.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

GCM to hold annual Easter Egg Hunt this Saturday

Grace Christian Ministries will hold its 5th Annual Easter Egg Hunt at the Kagman Community Center this Saturday, March 26, starting 9am.

Aside from the egg hunt, which are for kids ages 0-12 years old, there will also be a tambourine dance, mime presentation, puppet show, live music from Kagman youth worship team, and a message of hope from guest speaker from Rota, Melody Fredrick. Door prizes will be given all throughout the program.

Grace Christian Ministries has been in the island for 30 years spreading God's love and hope to the different communities.

The donors for the golden egg winners and door prizes are from the U.S. mainland, Hawaii, and individuals and local businesses on the island.

Golden egg winner for 0-3 years old will receive a tricycle. Winners of the 4-8 years old and 9-12 years old categories will receive a basket full of groceries and school supplies.

For more information, call pastor Dan at 287-7323. ***(PR)***

'Hairspray' auditions extended

Friends of the Arts has extended auditions for 'Hairspray" until the show is fully cast.

FOA needs about four more adults and six more students to complete the cast. All should come prepared to sing as well as read for the audition.

If you are interested in being in one of the most high-energy Broadway shows to ever hit the stage, then contact MariLou or leave a message at 256-9540. Performances are scheduled for mid-to-late May. ***(PR)***

Transfer station, landfill open on March 24, closed on March 25

The Lower Base Transfer Station and the Marpi Landfill waste disposal facilities will be opened on Commonwealth Covenant Day, Thursday, March 24, 2016. However, in observance of Good Friday, March 25, 2016, both facilities will be closed all day. ***(PR)***

SAIPAN HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
Office of the Mayor
Municipality of Saipan

NOTICE OF REGULAR SHEFA BOARD MEETING

In accordance with 1 CMC § 9901 et seq., as amended, the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance (SHEFA) Board hereby gives notice of the Regular Monthly Board Meeting set for Wednesday, March 23, 2016 at 9:30 a.m. at the Saipan Mayor's Office Conference Room, Ladera Center, Beach Road, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
  1. Roll Call
  2. Adoption of Agenda
  3. Adoption of Minutes from February 18, 2016
II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
III. REPORTS
  1. Administrator
  2. Chairman
  3. COMMITTEES
    a. Committee on Awards
    b. Committee on Appeal/Deferments/Forbearance
    c. Committee on Policy and Procedures
    d. Committee on Program and Development
    e. Committee of Fiscal, Legislative and Community Affairs
IV. OLD BUSINESS
  1. Revisit Priority Fields
  2. Propose to Increase Scholarship Amount
V. NEW BUSINESS
  1. Spring 2016 Application Status
VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION (CLOSED)
VII. NEXT MEETING
VIII. ADJOURNMENT

/s/ Oscar M. Babauta,
Chairman, Board of Directors

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (670) 237-6500 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Commonwealth Ports Authority hereby gives notice that a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, March 24, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. in the CPA conference room located on the second floor of the Captain George Fleming Building at the Port of Saipan.

The following items are on the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
  1. Call to Order
  2. Roll Call
  3. Adoption of Agenda

II. PUBLIC COMMENT(S)

III. EXECUTIVE SESSION

IV. SPECIAL AGENDA ITEMS
  1. Phoenix Services Inc. Lease
  2. Supplemental Budget Request (Airport)
  3. Saipan International Airport A/C Replacement Award

V. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items.

/s/ Thomas P. Villagomez
Acting Chairman, Board of Directors
March 22, 2016

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net
EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

INVITATION FOR BID

AMENDMENT #01 - NMHC IFB 2016-007
PURCHASE OF WILD LAND FIRE TRUCK
FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (DFEMS) - TINIAN

This Ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD Funds.

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors through its Chairman of the Board is soliciting competitive sealed bids from interested vendors for the purchase of Wild Land Fire Truck for the Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS) - Tinian.

Copies of the Scope of Work may be obtained at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Central Office in Garapan, Saipan during regular business hours, Monday thru Friday except CNMI Holidays beginning **Friday, February 19, 2016.**

Sealed bids must be marked "NMHC IFB 2016-007". For bidders within the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Capitol Hill (former EMO Office), Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950, no later than **10:30 a.m., local time, Thursday, March 31, 2016.**

Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10:30 a.m. local time Thursday, March 31, 2016, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via email to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and three (3) copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than Thursday, March 31, 2016, **AND** must be received no later than Monday, April 11, 2016. **Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.**

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement of Supply, Capitol Hill (former EMO), Saipan, at 10:00 a.m., local time Tuesday, April 12, 2016. However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 11:00 a.m. local time on **Thursday, March 31, 2016.**

Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, however, Article 7, "Local Business Preference" is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project.

This project is funded by a grant from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) provided to the Commonwealth. This project is also subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 which requires recipients of HUD funds to help insure that the economic opportunities generated by these HUD funds are provided to local low-income residents and the businesses that serve them "to the maximum extent feasible."

NMHC further notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contracts entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority and women-owned business enterprises (MBE/WBE) are afforded equal opportunity to submit bids and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, religion, gender, age, disability or national origin.

The Government reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive any defects in the said bids, if in the sole opinion of NMHC, to do so would be in its best interest. All bids will become the property of the Government.

For more information, contact Ms. Jocelyn C. Seman, Procurement Officer, or Mr. Jacob J. Muna, Planner/Environmental Officer at (670) 234-6866/7689 during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ **Jesse S. Palacios**
Corporate Director

/s/ **Herman S. Sablan**
Director, Procurement & Supply

$125K in damages awarded to businessman

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A Chinese businessman who alleged that he was detained in China for 22 months due to political influence exerted by his former business partners on Saipan, has prevailed in a lawsuit in federal court and was awarded $125,699.60 in damages.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona issued on Monday a default judgment in favor of Wanzhong Yu and against Mingnan Jin and Jinwei Guo.

Manglona found Jin and Guo liable to pay Yu $105,800 in compensatory damages for lost wages, $13,899.60 in compensatory damages for losses based on increased housing costs at $631.80 per month for rent, $2,000 in compensatory damages for the sale of a 2000 Toyota Echo, and $4,000 in compensatory for the sale of a 2000 Lexus.

Manglona heard Yu's motion for default judgment last Feb. 11.

Universal Group, through counsel Samuel Mok, sued its former president and shareholder, Yu, for conversion and the First Hawaiian Bank for breach of contract.

Universal Group alleged that Yu and the bank have blocked the company from gaining access to its $225,000 of its own funds from a business savings account.

Yu maintains he is still president of Universal Group.

Yu, through counsel Mark Scoggins, filed a cross-claim, alleging he was wrongfully detained in China for 22 months caused by political influence exerted by his former business partners. Yu named Jin and Guo as defendants in his cross-claim.

Jin and Guo are claiming they are the officers and directors of Universal Group and that Guo is now the sole shareholder.

Last May, Manglona dismissed Universal Group's claims against Yu. She, however, allowed Universal Group to file an amended complaint to allege the requisite facts for its claims.

In a default judgment issued on Monday, Manglona said as to ownership of shares in Universal Group, a declaratory judgment is granted in favor of Yu and against Guo.

Manglona said Yu has presented compelling evidence proving by a preponderance of the evidence that he was wrongfully detained in China for 671 days and that the document through which Yu was purported to have assigned his shares in Universal Group was executed under duress.

Manglona found that the alleged assignment of shares to Guo is void.

Manglona found that Yu was still the majority shareholder holding 440,000 shares out of a total of 800,000 shares in Universal Group on Nov. 22, 2013, and thereafter.

The judge also found that Yu did not call a meeting of the shareholders and directors on Nov. 22, 2013, and that the minutes document purporting to show that a meeting took place that date is invalid.

Accordingly, Manglona said, the court finds that Guo never acquired any shares and is not currently a shareholder in Universal Group.

As to ownership of J&S Corp., Manglona granted a declaratory judgment in favor of Yu and against Guo.

Manglona said the document through which Yu was purported to have assigned his shares in J&S Corp. was executed under duress and that the assignment is void.

The judge further found that on Nov. 22, 2013, there were 300,000 issues shares in J&S Corp. and that based on the testimony of Yu, there was no valid shareholder present.

Manglona said there being no majority shareholder on Nov. 22, 2013, the court finds that there was no meeting of the shareholders and directors and that the minutes document purporting to show that a meeting took place on that date is invalid.

Accordingly, the judge said, Guo never acquired any shares and is not now a shareholder in J&S Corp.

Manglona granted a default judgment in favor of Yu and against Guo and Jin on Yu's cause of action for conversion.

Manglona said based on Yu's testimony, the court finds that Jin for himself and at Guo's direction, wrongfully converted and sold a 2000 Toyota Echo and a 2000 Lexus.

Manglona said the two cars rightfully belonged to Yu.

Manglona said Jin and Guo forged Yu's signature when they sold the vehicles for their own benefit.

On the issue of false imprisonment, Manglona said Yu has presented compelling evidence that he was wrongfully detained in China for 671 days.

Manglona said Jin and Guo instigated and participated in the unlawful confinement of Yu.

The judge said Yu suffered injury and incurred damages due to the unlawful confinement.

On malicious prosecution, Manglona said Jin and Guo initiated the criminal proceedings against Yu without probable cause and primarily for a purpose other than bringing Yu to justice.

Manglona said Yu suffered injury and incurred damages as a result of the malicious prosecution.

Manglona also found that Yu suffered injury and incurred damages as a result of the abuse of process.

The judge, however, denied Yu's claim for defamation and trespassing.

Manglona said any false statement against Yu would have been made as early as 2008 and that a cause of action for defamation, if any, would have accrued at that time.

This claim, the judge said, is time-barred under the relevant two-year statute of limitations.

Manglona said Yu has no standing to assert trespassing because the alleged trespassing would have taken place on property belonging to Universal Group and J&S Corp.

The trespassing claim, if any, would belong to the corporations and not to Yu's, according to Manglona.

SVES Kindergarten registration starts in June

Kindergarten registration at San Vicente Elementary School for School Year 2016-2017 is scheduled to begin on June 13-17, 2016 from 9am to 11:30am and from 1:30pm to 3:30pm.

Registration will take place in the school main office. There are limited slots available therefore we encourage all parents/guardians to register during the above dates and times to ensure their child is enrolled for the upcoming school year. Your child must be 5 years of age on or before Sept. 30, 2011.

Registration requirements:
(All documents must be presented upon registration)

1. Copy of birth certificate
2. Original health certificate (from Public Health or any private clinic)
3. A copy of an updated medical insurance (Medicaid, government or private insurance, or student accidental insurance from private insurance policy holders
4. Map of residential location
5. Copy power of attorney/legal guardianship (if applicable)
6. Copy of report card or certificate of completion (from any pre-school)

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at 664-3981 through 84 or 237-3791. ***(PR)***

Saipan Adventures, Inc.
invites qualified U.S. worker candidates to apply for the following positions:

Customer Service Supervisor, Operations (4)
High School Diploma, GED, or equivalent. At least three (3) years work experience in a tour/travel agency, sales or service related work preferably with at least two (2) years of experience supervising a team of tour sales agents. Must be able to speak, read, write, and understand English and in Chinese (Mandarin) preferred. Must be willing to work shifts, evenings, holidays, and weekends.

Interested applicants may send their resumes to savi_recruitment@tanholdings.com. To be considered, applications must be submitted not later than April 06, 2016. Applications for Employment are available at the Front Office of Century Tours Inc. located on the Ground Floor of Kanoa Resort, Beach Road, Susupe Village. Applicants must be able and willing to work shifts, evenings, holidays, and weekends. Background checks and pre-employment drug testing will be required prior to employment.

Saipan Adventures, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer
Qualified Women, Minorities, Veterans and Persons with Disabilities are urged to apply.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

Please be informed that effective January 1, 2016,
TYW CORPORATION located in Dandan,
Saipan MP 96950 is officially closed for business.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB16-DPS-074

SUBMISSION DATE: APRIL 07, 2016 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"UPGRADE OF THE CNMI AUTOMATED STATE IDENTIFICATION AND DRIVER'S LICENSE INFORMATION SYSTEM, A PROJECT UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY-BUREAU OF MOTOR VEHICLE"

COPIES OF THE SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS FOR THIS ITB IS DUE NO LATER THAN THE **CLOSE OF BUSINESS, MARCH 29, 2016** SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO MR. JOHN A. DL. GUERRERO AT TELEPHONE NO. 670-285-9512.

THE GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

/S/ ROBERT A. GUERRERO
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC SAFETY

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB16-DFEMS-068

SUBMISSION DATE: APRIL 05, 2016 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF 140 COMPLETE SETS OF BRAND NEW 2015 MODEL YEAR FIREFIGHTER TURN-OUT GEAR FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FIRE & EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ CLAUDIO K. NORITA
COMMISSIONER OF DFEMS

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB16-DLNR/PR-083

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: APRIL 11, 2016 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF RIDING MOWER FOR THE DLNR – DIVISION OF PARKS & RECREATION"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISON OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS, IN WHOLE OR IN PART. AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ELICEO D. CABRERA
DIRECTOR, PARKS & RECREATION

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
MVA-RFP-16-2332

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

For: PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TO PROVIDE FOR A SUSTAINABILITY/ FEASIBILITY STUDY ON CNMI'S TRAVEL INDUSTRY

Closing Date: April 8, 2016 Time: 3:00 p.m.
Submit sealed proposals to: Marianas Visitors Authority
P.O. Box 500861 CK, Saipan, MP 96950

Interested parties may pick up the scope of work at the Marianas Visitors Authority office between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, except holidays or by visiting the MVA website at www.mymarianas.com.

/s/ Marian Aldan-Pierce
MVA Chair, Board of Directors

/s/ PERRY P. TENORIO
Managing Director

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB16-GOV/CIP-077 (A) (B)

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: APRIL 05, 2016 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) ALL-IN-ONE DESKTOP COMPUTER AND ONE (1) LAPTOP FOR GOVERNOR'S OFFICE, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM"

COPIES OF THE SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ VIRGINIA C. VILLAGOMEZ
CIP ADMINISTRATOR

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

Procurement And Supply
CNMI Government
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB16-DPS-086
SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: APRIL 11, 2016 TIME: 10:30 A.M.

"SECURITY SERVICES – DPS IMPOUND LOT IN LOWER BASE, A PROJECT UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY"

Copies of the specifications may be picked-up at the Office of the Director, Divison of Procurement and Supply, located at the former Emergency Management Office, Ascencion Drive, Building No. 1301, Capitol Hill, Saipan during regular working hours.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all bids and proposals, in whole or in part and to waive any imperfections in the best interest of the Commonwealth.

/S/ ROBERT A. GUERRERO
Commissioner of Public Safety

/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
Director, P&S

AS CUC CONTINUES TO LOOK FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Camacho renewed for another 60 days

By FRAULEINE VILLANUEVA-DIZON
frauleine_villanueva@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gary Camacho will be serving as the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. acting executive director for another two months.

In a board meeting Monday, the CUC Board of Directors approved the extension of Camacho's acting capacity.

Vice chair Eric San Nicolas made the motion to extend Camacho "to have him in acting capacity as we continue to JVA out the ED position and look for applicants."

It was seconded by board member Albert Taitano and was carried after unanimous yes votes from the members who were present.

The initial extension of Camacho as acting executive director was set to expire on April 6, 2016, but due to the extension, he will be in the position until June.

Camacho was given the position after Water and Waste Water Division chief engineer John Riegel's term as acting executive director ended in December.

Riegel became acting executive director after former CUC executive director Alan Fletcher resigned from the position last June.

According to board chair Adelina Roberto, they have no current applicants for the executive director position but they were given the go signal to publish another round of job vacancy announcements for all their stipulated order positions.

The executive director position is among the vacant senior management positions required under Stipulated Order No. 1, which CUC still fails to fill.

CUC is said to face penalties of $2,000 to $5,000 per day for noncompliance with the requirement to hire stipulated-order officials. They are said to have already incurred $40 million in penalties for failing to comply with SO1.

LibDay committee now accepting carnival rides concessions

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The 2016 CNMI Liberation Day committee is now accepting proposals from those who want to set up and operate carnival rides in the upcoming festival that is set to open on June 10. The committee said anyone or even a company could come in and manage the rides this year.

Guam's Scott Thompson along with Tony Glad had been operating the carnival rides in the previous Liberation Day celebrations. Thompson was again trying to provide the rides for this year but the committee chose to reject his offer.

The committee, at first, also chose to scrap the carnival rides since they don't want Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang to be held legally liable in case something bad happens to any person using the rides.

"The one major issue is liability. The committee also represents the mayor that's why we don't want the mayor to have any legal problems or suffer litigation," said committee chair Chris D. Leon Guerrero.

Committee member Henry Hofschneider, who is also Apatang's special assistant, suggested to open the concession of operating the carnival rides to anyone since this is what Guam does. "They [Guam] leave it open to anyone. Anybody can come in and operate it."

The consensus of the committee is to reject the contract being proposed by Thompson and open the operation of the rides to anybody. The committee decided to follow what Guam has been doing and let anybody or a company come in as a regular vendor to operate the carnival rides.

The carnival ride operator, however, would be held liable in case of any untoward incident.

Apatang said the carnival ride operator would be similar to other concessions where they get the proceeds 100 percent. "Anyone interested in providing rides can now submit their intention or proposal."

Gregorio Sablan Jr., who along with Gordon Marciano attended yesterday's meeting at the Saipan Mayor's Office conference room, said a 75-percent tax is imposed in any equipment and other parts that would come in the CNMI.

The committee set a deadline of April 30 for anyone who wanted to submit a proposal of setting up and operating the carnival rides. June 10 is the opening of the Liberation Day carnival at the Garapan Fishing Base.

Century Tours, Inc.
invites qualified U.S. worker candidates to apply for the following positions:

Accountant (2)
Bachelor's Degree in Accounting with at least three (3) years work experience in general and financial accounting, preferably in tour operation, sales or service based work environment. Must be proficient in the use of SAP R3 Financial and Controlling (FICO) software. Previous experience with HR Information and/or Enterprise Resource Planning Systems is an advantage.

Accountant (2 Part-Time)
Bachelor's Degree in Accounting with at least three (3) years work experience in general and financial accounting, preferably in tour operation, sales or service based work environment. Must be proficient in the use of SAP R3 Financial and Controlling (FICO) software. Previous experience with HR Information and/or Enterprise Resource Planning Systems is an advantage.

Accounting Manager (1)
College degree in finance, accounting, economics, or business administration and five (5) years of progressive financial management experience. Minimum of three (3) years experience in directing the preparation of financial reports and implementing cash management activities. Proficient in the use of SAP R3 Financial and Controlling (FICO) system and Microsoft software.

Customer Service Agent (6)
High School Diploma, GED or equivalent with at least two (2) months work experience in travel/tour operation or sales or service based work environment, room reservations and vendor relations. Must be proficient in Microsoft Office applications (Excel, MS Word, Outlook, Power Point). Preferably fluent in both written and oral communication in the English, Korean, Japanese, or Chinese languages. Able and willing to work shifts, evenings, holidays, and weekends. Able to drive tourists safely through various tour routes.

Customer Service Agent (6 Part-Time)
High School Diploma, GED or equivalent with at least two (2) months work experience in travel/tour operation or sales or service based work environment, room reservations and vendor relations. Must be proficient in Microsoft Office applications (Excel, MS Word, Outlook, Power Point). Preferably fluent in both written and oral communication in the English, Korean, Japanese, or Chinese languages. Able and willing to work shifts, evenings, holidays, and weekends. Able to drive tourists safely through various tour routes.

Customer Service Supervisor, Retail (2)
High School Diploma, GED or equivalent. At least one (1) to two (2) years of related supervisory experience in a luxury retail environment. Must have the knowledge and computer skills to handle the POS register and other operations and communication systems.

Operations Manager (1)
College or Associate's degree in Management, Travel and Tour or any related field. At least three (3) years of progressive management experience in tour and travel operations is required. Written and verbal communications skills in English and Chinese (Mandarin) preferred, must be able to communicate with Chinese vendors and suppliers. Must be willing to work evenings, holidays, and weekends.

Sales Associate, Retail (4)
High School Diploma, GED or equivalent. Prior experience in luxury retail sales is preferred including the ability to read, speak and understand English and Chinese (Mandarin). Must be able to lift at least 15 pound items and carry it for at least 100 yards with or without using a trolley. Must be familiar with the Point-Of-Sales (POS) System. Must be able and willing to work shifts, evenings, holidays, and weekends.

Sales Associate (10 Part-Time)
High School Diploma, GED or equivalent. Prior experience in luxury retail sales is preferred including the ability to read, speak and understand English and Chinese (Mandarin). Must be able to lift at least 15 pound items and carry it for at least 100 yards with or without using a trolley. Must be familiar with the Point-Of-Sales (POS) System.

Tour Sales Representative (18)
High School Diploma, GED or equivalent. A minimum of six (6) months to one (1) year experience in a related field. Work experience with travel and tour operation is an advantage. Able to drive tourists safely through various tour routes. Preferably fluent in both written and oral communication in the English, Russian, Korean, or Chinese languages.

Interested applicants may send their resumes to ceti_recruitment@tanholdings.com.
To be considered, applications must be submitted not later than April 06, 2016. Applications for Employment are available at the Front Office of Century Tours Inc. located on the Ground Floor of Kanoa Resort, Beach Road, Susupe Village. Applicants must be able and willing to work shifts, evenings, holidays, and weekends. Background checks and pre-employment drug testing will be required prior to employment.

Century Tours, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer
Qualified Women, Minorities, Veterans and Persons with Disabilities are urged to apply.

Job Vacancy Announcement

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

Classification: Hourly, may lead to a salaried staff position.

Wage Range: $10.50 to $12.00 per hour, depending on qualifications and experience.

Reports to: General Manager

JOB DESCRIPTION
Summary/Objective: The human resource manager is directly responsible for the overall administration, coordination and evaluation of the human resource function.

Essential Functions: Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.
1. Develops and administers various human resources plans and procedures for all company personnel.
2. Plans, organizes and controls all activities of the department. Participates in developing department goals, objectives and systems.
3. Helps GM develop, recommend and implement personnel policies and procedures; prepares and maintains handbook on policies and procedures; performs benefits administration to include claims resolution, change reporting, approving invoices for payment, annual re-evaluation of policies for cost-effectiveness, information activities program and cash flow.
4. Develops and maintains affirmative action program; files EEO-1 annually; maintains other records, reports and logs to conform to EEO regulations.
5. Conducts recruitment effort for all exempt and nonexempt personnel, students and temporary employees; conducts new-employee orientations; monitors career-pathing program, employee relations counseling, outplacement counseling and exit interviewing; writes and places advertisements.
6. Establishes and maintains department records and reports. Participates in administrative staff meetings and attends other meetings, such as seminars. Maintains company organization charts and employee directory.
7. Evaluates reports, decisions and results of department in relation to established goals. Recommends new approaches, policies and procedures to effect continual improvements in efficiency of department and services performed.
8. Performs other incidental and related duties as required and assigned.
9. Processes paperwork necessary for Contract Worker (CW) visa renewals, transfers, and new hires.
10. Maintains all records and generates reports required for USCIS and other agencies.
11. Manages the employee requests for HRP 401K program loans and other matters concerning the program.

Competencies:
1. Human Resources Capacity
2. Ethical Conduct
3. Strategic Thinking.
4. Leadership.
5. Decision Making.
6. Financial Management.

Work Environment: This job operates in a professional office environment. This role routinely uses standard office equipment such as computers, phones, photocopiers, filing cabinets and fax machines.

Physical Demands: The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is occasionally required to stand; walk; sit; use hands to finger, handle, or feel objects, tools or controls; reach with hands and arms; climb stairs; balance; stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl; talk or hear; and taste or smell. The employee must occasionally lift or move up to 25 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by the job include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception and the ability to adjust focus.

Position Type/Expected Hours of Work: This is a full-time position. Days and hours of work are Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 4 p.m. This position regularly requires long hours and sometimes weekend work.

Required Education and Experience: A bachelor's degree and three years of human resource experience, or nine years' experience in the HR field.

Preferred Additional Eligibility Qualification: SHRM Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP) certification (preferred)

Other Duties: Work with accountant and office personnel to support needs of employees and management staff.

Send Resume: David L. Bush, General Manager, Hawaiian Rock Products,
PMB 139, PPP P.O. Box 10000, Saipan, MP 96950; by facsimile (670) 288-0408;
or by e-mail to dbush@hawaiianrock.com

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Hernandez wins gold with Saxation in final appearance

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Alexis John Hernandez and the Saxation struck gold in the 12th Tumon Bay Music Festival early this month in what could be the former's final performance with the band. The only son of Allan C. Hernandez and the former Violeta Tan Torres is set to leave for the U.S. mainland after the school year.

Atsuko Eck, Ayana Kawahara, and Justina Lee joined Hernandez, known as A.J. to his family and friends, in the Saxation—which is made up of former and current students from Saipan Southern High School.

The Saxation won gold in the small band category, while the SSHS Manta Ray Band—where Hernandez played as a percussionist—finished with a silver medal behind Marianas High School's Rhythm 'N' Harmony for the Festival Sweepstakes Award.

"I came with the Manta band as a chaperon but I could still play with them being a former member," said the 19-year-old Hernandez, who was also part of the Manta Ray Band that won gold in 2013 and 2015. The Manta Ray Band settled for the silver behind Rhythm 'N' Harmony last year.

In his senior year at SSHS, he played bass with the percussion group of the Manta Ray Band that was awarded gold in the 2015 Los Angeles Music Festival.

Studies is the main reason why Hernandez is leaving Saipan as he will pursue his nursing degree at the Highline Community College in Des Moines, Washington. He will be living with his uncle, his father's brother, in Kent, which is about 10 kilometers or six miles away from Des Moines.

Despite having music as a big part of his junior and high school years, some would have thought Hernandez would continue studying the art in college. He, however, chose to pursue a nursing career.

His love for music began in his junior year when he was still studying at Grace Christian Academy. He first learned to play the guitar after seeing two of his uncles, the one in Kent and the other in the Philippines, play the instrument.

The Manta Ray Band's history of winning competitions and the love of performing made him decide to transfer from GCA to SSHS. "Music brings people closer together and I love to perform in front of a crowd. To show the people what you can do."

But why switch from playing bass guitar to saxophone? The answer: Seattle native and jazz saxophonist Kenny G.

"I love listening to Kenny G. and I have most of his original albums. I wanted to be like him but now I just want music to be my hobby."

He said that he plans to join his uncle's local band in Kent where they play in private parties and other occasion to earn some extra cash.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A.J. Hernandez, left, joins fellow Saxation members Justina Lee, Ayana Kawahara, and Atsuko Eck after their performance at the 12th Tumon Bay Music Festival in Guam. The group's winning piece was Randy Newman's *You've Got A Friend Me*, the theme song of the *Toy Story* movies.

NMIS student grabs NJSDA gold medal

Northern Marianas International School student Deidre P. Rosete will be part of the CNMI's National Junior Speech and Debate Association team that will compete in the nationals in Salt Lake City, Utah, after topping the Dramatic Interpretation category during the regional competition.

She also took third place in Prose during the regionals of NJSDA.

Rosete and partner Andrei Bayking also won second place in the Duet Acting category in the CNMI Thespian Regional Festival, a separate Public School System event. Rosete also won third place in monologue on the Thespian tilt.

Rosete won last year's NJSDA DUO Interpretation were she represented the CNMI in the nationals in Dallas, Texas.

"I am very happy to have a chance to compete in Utah this year. I would like to thank my family, friends, teachers, and the administration of NMIS," Rosete said.

Rosete will be accompanied in Utah by her coach Ma. Grace P. Rosete.

Aside from Rosete and Bayking, Christian Aldan also came in second place in Declamation.

NMIS vice principal Jener Pineda said, "The NMIS family is very proud of all its students for their hard work and dedication. Congratulations to all the participants."

NMIS is a private school catering to infant and toddlers, pre-school, elementary. and middle school levels. The school is located at the 4th floor of Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Northern Marianas International School student Deidre P. Rosete, seen here posing with her coach Ma. Grace P. Rosete, will represent the CNMI in the Dramatic Interpretation category of the National Junior Speech and Debate Association nationals in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

March 23, 2000

Amendments to fair labor bill sought

Acting Attorney General Herb Soll yesterday called for changes on the proposed comprehensive labor laws under review by the House of Representatives, which he said could give more freedom to nonresident workers whose presence in the CNMI should be kept under control. He also said provisions of the legislation should be re-examined, noting that the existing mechanism resolving disputes between workers and employers has curbed labor abuses on the island. Testifying before a hearing conducted by the Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee, he stressed HB 12-134 would allow thousands of guest workers to move freer than what they are currently enjoying.

Gov't asked to help existing business first

Commonwealth Development Authority Board Chair John S. Tenorio and Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Lynn Knight yesterday said the CNMI government should focus its efforts in looking at ways on how to help the current businesses on island survive the downturn of the economy. Instead of embarking on trade missions to entice new investments, Mr. Tenorio and Ms. Knight said the government should consider providing tax breaks to companies on island. However, Mr. Tenorio clarified that such tax incentives should be given to businesses carrying out expansion programs.

March 23, 2001

Saipan braces for new power plant

There is nothing in writing yet to confirm that a contract was signed by the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation and Enron International Mariana Power Inc.

However, reports said major disagreements have already been ironed out which virtually clears the road for the eventual execution of an agreement to proceed with the construction of the controversial 60-megawatt power plant. In fact, both parties have agreed to work within a specific timeframe, under which period an official deal should already be in place. CUC Board Chair Jesus T. Guerrero distanced himself from the issue, pointing out that any information about the controversial power plant project should come from Vice Chair Laura Manglona, who heads the negotiating team. Efforts to reach Ms. Manglona proved futile. She is reportedly off-island. Mr. Guerrero has instructed CUC Corporate Communication Special Advisor Pamela Mathis to get updates and status of discussions with Enron. The board chair wants official information released to the media Monday.

More homestead lots for Northern Islands pushed

Saipan Representative William S. Torres urged Board of Public Lands Chair Manuel Villagomez to provide additional homestead lots to the people of the Northern Islands. The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation told Mr. Torres in its Feb. 20 communication that "at this time, plans (envisioned by Public Law 6-34) have not materialized to develop or sell the properties because of restrictions imposed by the MPLC upon transfer of the property to NMHC." However, Mr. Torres said when the property was transferred to the then Mariana Islands Housing Authority by the Trust Territory Office of High Commissioner in Feb. 26, 1955 it was labeled for "low-cost housing and urban renewal."

March 23, 2005

Snake sighted at the Saipan airport

A snake has been sighted at the Saipan International Airport and experts, including a team from Guam, are now searching the area to catch it.

A confirmed snake sighting was reported by a Continental Airlines employee at about 1:15am on Sunday, March 20, 2005 to Department of Lands and Natural Resources-Division of Fish and Wildlife staff. DLNR-DFW responded by setting up alert notices, snake traps and have begun conducting visual and canine searches in the area. The sighting occurred on the west side of the main terminal building. The witness reported the snake as being green/brown in color and approximately 3 feet in length. The witness observed the snake for approximately 4 seconds before the snake fled under a nearby lumber pile. After several canine searches near and around the lumber pile it was confirmed that a snake might have taken refuge underneath the lumber.

DPH to inspect Garapan homes for pests

The Department of Public Health yesterday started inspecting houses in Garapan that could harbor mosquitoes and rodents. Acting deputy secretary Margarita Torres Aldan ordered inspectors under the Bureau of Environmental Health to check residential homes and commercial buildings in the famed tourist district beginning yesterday until April 12. The order said that houses and commercial establishments along the Puntan Mutchot Hotel Street would be checked for mosquitoes and rat dwellings. The breeding sites could come in the form of empty cans, used tires, and idle and abandoned vehicles.

CCCA partners with KKMP for 35th Flame Tree Arts Festival

Department of Community and Cultural Affairs-Commonwealth Council for Culture and Arts executive director Angel Songao Hocog executed a memorandum of understanding with KKMP Charitable Foundation and KKMP Radio to raise funds and implement the Flame Tree Arts Festival for 2016. The Flame Tree Arts Festival is slated for April 14-17, 2016 at Civic Center in Susupe.

Having KKMP facilitate the Flame Tree Arts festival will allow CCCA to focus its efforts in the preparation for the 12th Festival of Pacific Arts (FESTPAC) to be held in Guam May 22- June 2, 2016.

KKMP has the essential capabilities to host the arts program such as staging equipment, sound, and lighting systems. Hocog has assigned Parker Yobei as the chairman and executive director designate to the festival preparations.

KKMP co-hosted the Christmas in the Marianas program along with the Marianas Visitors Authority and Kinpachi Restaurant last Christmas season and was a raging success with more activities and participants than previous years. "We hope this sensational experience will be brought to the Flame Tree Arts Festival in celebration of its 35th year anniversary," said Hocog.

Beginning in his acting capacity as secretary for DCCA, Robert Hunter said, "This public-private partnership allows CCCA to thoroughly focus on preparations with our 250 performers and artists who will be representing the Northern Mariana Islands at FesPac. I look forward to both successes at FestPac and at our 35th Flame Tree Arts Festival."

"KKMP will be responsible for all facets of the 35th Flame Tree Arts Festival, and performers, supporters, vendors, and sponsors should work with KKMP to ensure the 35th Flame Tree Arts Festival will be a festival to be remembered," said Hocog.

The memorandum of understanding with KKMP, which is good for two years, will be at no cost to CCCA. The organizers will remit 20 percent of net revenues and financial report to CCCA.

For more information and to join the Festival, contact KKMP at 233-1440 or 287-8145 or Parker Yobei at (670) 322-9982/83 or (670) 4831294. ***(PR)***

DPW improves Administrative Services Division in past year

The Administrative Services Division of the Department of Public Works has seen several improvements over the past year.

According to Department of Public Works Secretary James Ada, the Administrative Services Division is crucial to maintaining and updating the department's policies and regulations, personnel management, procurement, public relations, program development, budget preparation, and analysis. Ada noted that the division is also responsible for the oversight of the six divisions within DPW.

The Administrative Services Division, he says, prepared and routed different types of personnel actions and office documents for civil service and contract employees, while continuing to implement the drug and alcohol policy and the monitoring of expenditures.

Ada shared that DPW hired a highway engineer under the approved Federal Highway Compensation Plan under the Technical Services Division, Highway Branch which is 100 percent federally funded.

In addition to the highway engineer, building inspector trainees were hired to properly staff the Building Safety Code division as mandated by Public Law No. 6-45.

The division was also able to continue to have Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) pay for portions of office space occupied by DPW.

With this, Ada expressed that continuing to provide additional training and/or workshops to employees, which includes sessions and hands-on applications to gradually upgrade the knowledge and skills of employees, remains a priority.

"We've made progress toward prerequisites for competence in flood plain administration," he said.

These courses, he says, included flood provision using international codes, coastal construction workshop for home builders, steel design, construction options, prescriptive means of egress components, and building department financial management.

Ada shared that much progress has been made towards prerequisites for the certification of building inspector supervisors.

He noted that the division maximized federal funding under the approved FY 16 Compensation Plan under Federal Highway Administration to fill vacant positions.

This allowed DPW to hire trades helpers and account clerks to properly staff the Solid Waste Management Division. In perpetuating the trades, DPW also participated in WIA's fully federally funded Displaced Worker Program to assist in the Soudelor Recovery efforts.

The division also replaced old dilapidated service vehicles and successfully procured vehicles for Tinian and Rota Solid Waste as well as the Building Safety Code Division, the Secretary's Office, Roads & Grounds Division and the Division of Solid Waste Management.

He says that DPW's Administrative Services Division has slowly progressed in maintaining public infrastructure and competence but much more needs to be addressed within the many divisions. ***(PR)***

ESFDB's Tobongbanua, Lucero excel in PSS STEM Fair

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, John Anthony "AJ" Tobongbanua, ESFDB STEM coordinator Mary Rose Lucero, and Angelo S. Lucero pose or a group photo.

The "Importance of vinegar makes the rice last longer," "Think before you drink," "How to purify water?" "Coconut juice energy?" and "Adding value to purple kamuti" are the projects Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja students displayed against hundreds of other projects at the annual CNMI Public School System STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Fair held at Saipan Southern High School last March 12.

Eskuelan San Francico de Borja's science committee—made up of teachers and administrators—facilitated the students' educational and fun-filled STEM projects, which showcased researches, experiments, and displays created by the school's ingenious students.

Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja is proud to announce their first place winners. In Cluster 2 (3rd to 5th grade), 3rd grader John Anthony Tobongbanua; and in Cluster 3 (6th to 8th), 8th grader Angelo S. Lucero took the top spot in the competition.

"I am really impressed with the quality of work our students produced. With a focus on STEM, our students were able to compose a hypothesis and use the scientific methods to test their theories. This really supports the cross cutting concepts that unify the study of science, technology, engineering, and math," said school administrator/principal Carmen H. Atalig.

"It is wonderful to see the students so excited and engaged in their learning while competing at the same time," added Atalig. "At every level, students couldn't have been more prepared and willing to share what they learned."

After winning the CNMI level, Lucero and Tobongbanu will be heading to Guam sometime in May 6, 2016 to compete amongst Guam's best student scientist.

"This will be my second time competing in Guam. Last school year, I had a chance to go to Guam and participated in the 37th Annual Guam Island Wide Science Fair. It was cool because it was held at the University of Guam," said Lucero.

"This is my first time to go to Guam and compete. I hope to continue the success I had on Saipan. I would like to thank God, my parents, Mrs. Atalig, and my teachers for their help," said Tobongbanua.

"These kids really showed that they can think on their feet," said school science coordinator Mary Rose Lucero. "It was gratifying to see them excel."

"They (Lucero and Tobongbanua) demonstrated incredible dedication and outside-the-box thinking in developing their concepts, and the results of their hard work really shone at the fair," said board chair Edward Maratita Jr.

The administration, faculty, staff, and students would like to express their appreciation to the parents, STEM fair judges, and Tita A. Hocog. ***(PR)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Wishing my baby girl, Athena Jaycee Leitipscheng aka AJ, a Happy Sweet 16th birthday. May God bless you always and many more birthdays to come. Know that you are truly loved. From Mommy and your siblings (RJ, JD, Prince, and PJ).

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy 6th birthday to our only SONshine and brother, Franklin Jon K.Laniyo! May your special day, March 23,v 2016 be filled with many treats and much fun! Have a great and blessed day! Xoxos from Mommy, Daddy, and Kai-Lia.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXVI, Issue No. 58

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Medicare's big drug test

Federal officials poked a medical hornet's nest recently with an ambitious attempt to do what many American taxpayers—and patients—demand: tame rising prescription drug costs in Medicare.

Officials at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services rolled out a proposal to test new ways of reimbursing doctors who administer drugs in their offices and in hospital outpatient departments. These drugs include cancer medications, antibiotics and certain eye care treatments—about $19 billion a year in Medicare spending. (This does not include prescription drugs that seniors take on their own; that's a different part of Medicare.)

How would this proposal work? Right now, Medicare pays providers the average price of a drug plus 6 percent to cover their costs. So the higher the price, the more the doctor earns. Patrick Conway, chief medical officer for CMS, calls that a "perverse incentive" that could encourage doctors to select more expensive medications when cheaper ones could be just as effective.

Under the proposal, there would be different pricing tests in different parts of the country. In one test, Medicare would reduce that 6 percent payment to 2.5 percent plus a flat daily fee for some doctors, to see if that alters the drugs they choose to administer; other doctors would see no change. Talk about Mediscare … for doctors taking the cut.

Another phase of tests would peg reimbursements to a drug's demonstrated effectiveness for different conditions. Or set benchmark prices for a group of similar drugs, steering doctors and patients to choose the lowest priced alternative.

CMS says the five-year trial would push doctors to prescribe the most effective drugs, not necessarily the most expensive.

Not surprisingly, doctors groups and other critics blast this proposal as dangerous government meddling in a doctor's decision about what to prescribe.

"This experiment is a misguided government intrusion on the treatment of seniors with cancer and a very dangerous precedent in severing the sacred physician-patient bond," wrote Bruce Gould, president of the Community Oncology Alliance, a nonprofit group that advocates for independent oncology practices.

The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, which represents the drug industry, says the proposal could cut patient access to treatments and "create uncertainties that could discourage investment in future treatment advances."

Curbing drug costs has been a Medicare Holy Grail for years.

But most Americans don't favor—nor do we—allowing government regulators to decide which drugs patients should receive and which are too expensive. That smacks of rationing.

Under this proposal, doctors in the test group would still get paid for the drugs they administer, including a 2.5 percent bump for overhead costs. They just wouldn't get the 6 percent to which they're accustomed. So yes, some doctors that prescribe expensive meds may see their bottom lines wilt a little.

See MEDICARE on Page 11

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Salonga and Dem Bones

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the Saipan Tribune.

I had students sing the tune I now hum in honor of the Philippines' Jovito Salonga who recently died at 95. Older by three months to my mother who sleeps her remaining time at a hospice in Honolulu of Oahu, I had the privileged of sitting with the senator at a Cosmopolitan Church-hosted Wednesday gatherings on Taft Ave. shortly after Martial Law was declared by President Ferdinand Marcos. The son of a Presbyterian pastor, Senator Salonga shared the discussion with fellow Church member, West Pointer Fidel Ramos who later became President of the Philippines.

But Dem Bones on Saipan gathered one Saturday evening, and though I wanted to mosey over, I did not wish to be perceived as engaged in partisan politics (yup, I am political, but not partisan) especially since the focus was between Clinton vs. Sanders rather than the clash between the Obama Dem Bones and the defensive Gophers. BTW, Clinton was the CNMI's chosen Dem for the presidential election.

The tune, *The Chariots of Fire*, kept intruding. Members of the Institute of Cultural Affairs attached the following lyrics to the tune, now appropriate to the memory of Salonga and Dem Bones.

Our world in transition, old forms torn apart;
Creates a new vision, demands a new heart.
A new world is crushing the one that we knew;
Our minds barely touching, the change rushing through.

But ours is a dream that gives the world,
A vision to share
And ours is a hope that gives the people,
Courage to care.

The earth is a village seven billion strong;
We're building the home where each one can belong.
The past is behind us, we're moving along;
our passion goes with us, all history long.

If ever a singer were needed to sing,
If ever a dreamer were needed to dream,
If ever a people were called on to stand,
T'is surely this moment, t'is surely this land.

In this season of Lent, the song is a dedication hymn to a vocation, in secular terms, a choice of engagement.

Salonga cared for a nation, not with rants but with calculated reason. What would get us to do the same for the planet? To be sure, we naturally care, a quality of our being human—from making sure that we optimize our sense experiences of sight, smell, sound, taste, touch, and compensate if something is lacking; to express as intensely as possible our feelings; to articulate our thoughts with as wide as possible the points of references; and to be comprehensive and practical in planning deeds. Everyone cares. Salonga did. I, too, and Dem Bones. Even The Donald cares.

Salonga's senses were gravely challenged when a bomb exploded at a political rally in the famous explosion on Plaza Miranda 1971 where he lead his party for another term in the Senate. But not his sensibilities; he topped the elections that year though deeply scarred. The Senator also took time and effort to defend cases against Martial law including that of the martyred Ninoy Aquino.

He clutched on national consciousness. I have expanded it to include the time's demand for earthrise consciousness, glad to converse with a White House that finds the image of the global village viable. Salonga's passion was in defense of a country he loved. Dem Bones fray our borders to a wider world encompassing a planet.

I seek consensus with "glocal" citizens, a word I used at the Vancouver '76 UN Habitat Conference. Glocal is now a word in the Oxford English Dictionary embodied in the Earthrise consciousness preceding the earthbound commitments that are deeds emerging from my guts. It is the "courage to care" in the earthrise earthwise earthbound phrase.

On Christmas 1968, earthrise consciousness intruded into my brain. I ran into a group on Chicago's Westside early '67 at a community project wedging across the sociological layers of the city (downtown, inner city, suburban, and exurban) into the a sociological Fifth City incarnate. I met predominantly Aryan utopian do-gooders, well intentioned but in the cynicism of the '60s, misguided. Then I bumped into them in 1972 living in the slums of Santa Ana, Metro Manila. They held an ecclesiola (little church) in a flooded dining room with the water just below the bench seat. We carried on anyway in spite of the treat of electrical shocks. I was impressed.

Not too long after, my family moved in. We took the social process—the economic of sustenance and support, the politic of order and decision-making, and the culture of significance and meaning; we identified issues, articulated contradictions, created proposals, and honed them as maneuvers, strategies, and tactics within a timeframe at specified locations with assigned personnel, and a created a self-story of why we did the darn thing. We did this with the discipline of poverty, chastity, and obedience of a monastic Order in doing our mission.

Lent is a lifestyle all year round. It is the courage to care that Salonga demonstrated; the courage to care for planet Earth that Obama and Dem Bones want to do, and my personal call for the rest of my life.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Forgetting Mr. Stupid!

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the* Saipan Tribune.

No matter how you slice, splice, or dice the single most vital issue politicians prefer ignoring at all cost is the depressed economy. In the process, it seems they've learned to live smelling the powerful stench of negligence as a permanent part of their existence.

The issue, no matter how well they've avoided it, keeps returning like a two-headed corn snake. It's in the famous slogan by James Carville, the shill of former President Clinton who said, "It's the economy, stupid!" Locally, "It still is the economy, stupid!"

Though there's the dire need to address it so that work can begin domesticating the issue most politicians have sleepwalked it like clueless zombies. Now, if this is such a humongous task then why are you in the policymaking business?

Across the street (administration), the guys and gals are racing to establish travel agencies to catch the governor or lieutenant governor is their next planned junket trip. Learned that the lieutenant governor is headed to Japan and DC. It's his debut trip and loves the notoriety that comes with a junket fully paid for by "we the people" or taxpayers.

Realistically, though, you take a cursory review of life across the archipelago and you wonder how could the people of Rota endure the horrendous prices of basic commodities twice to thrice what we pay in the business center. The price of basic commodities is criminal! Reason? Shipping costs are far too expensive than meets the eye.

Imagine shipping telephone poles after a devastating storm. The firm that sent the poles had to fork out some $8,000 for berthing at the seaport on Rota. The shipping firm was asked to itemize the cost that quickly deferred it to another office somewhere. Talk about milking consumers 1,000-3,000 percent! This needs serious probing to ensure that the "we few" greedy are put in their place!

I strongly recommend the consumer's division at the AG's Office take the lead to simply figure our the beastly and fecal shipping costs being charged by shipping firms on Rota.

■■■

Financial Stress: One of the leading indicators of a strong island economy is when government is in the black for at least two years. In other words, it isn't stressed for funds to pay for hospital operations, PSS, DPS, and other financial obligations like debts to vendors such as CUC.

But the local government is in deficit by some $510 million in addition to about $789 million in unfunded liability (debt) owed the NMI Retirement Fund. It has admitted some $9 million in shortfall last fiscal year and $7 million this fiscal year. No wonder it is stressed meeting the annual fees to the Settlement Fund. Now, they're looking for advance payment of $20 million from BSI confirming fiscal stress!

Appalling that in spite of its fiscal crisis it hasn't taken any cost cutting measures to pare down expenses. About the only cost cutting step it has taken is holding back spending because there's nothing to spend in view of revenue collection still heading steadily south! It now braves spending more than it collects. It's called deficit spending!

The effects of a depressed economy have been largely eased by the golden parachute found in federal entitlement programs like food stamps, housing, Medicaid, and others. Imagine if they weren't available. We'd be dealing with foodlessness, homelessness, and hopelessness among less fortunate families doing search and rescue from the depths of the Marianas Trench.

Though these forms of assistance are available for the poorer sector of our community I hope it isn't taken for granted as the ultimate future of folks who wish to get out of the humiliation lining monthly for handouts because economic opportunities here have dried up. Any plans to assist our people secure meaningful jobs ahead? Don't forget what Mr. Stupid's (James Carville) famous coining, "It's the economy, stupid!"

■■■

Family Fabric: For generations, the family unit in these isles has held us together through thick and thin. Most have done well keeping obligations intact. It is in the family unit where parents teach their children empathy, cultural religious values, and a sense of humility, among others.

Indeed, not all families are poised to instill good discipline on their children. There are some who had to deal with what's known as "broken homes." Their kids become victims of alcohol, drug, and gambling addictions. It turns into dire situation where kids fend for themselves in a very scarce setting. It includes looking for their own food, clothing, school supplies, etc.

As a result of wasteful spending family environment usually turn hostile under the circumstance. And so conveying love and discipline to them could very well end up in their being physically abused. The distraction of insufficiency for basic needs turn schoolwork into another challenge often failing in class work. Even after school activities turns into some form of survival.

Family income is flushed down the toilet of alcohol, gambling and drugs. It's usually gone before there's time to check if food is needed or other familial obligations have been met. It's a sad slide into what we call broken homes. Rebuilding the family unit could be done but it remains a challenge in itself for as long as parents continue sliding into their old habits.

Mom may have empathetic siblings who'd bring her and children under their roof. It is a very charitable gesture expected of local families. But while the problem may look like a solution, it equally triggers yet another set of problems for the welcoming family.

The inconvenience would force mom to look for help like housing from some charitable organization. Though she may find one how is she going to deal with monthly utility bills, securing a family car, and clothing for her kids, among other needs?

A reality check on Syrian refugees

By DANIEL SPECKHARD
The Baltimore Sun

Daniel Speckhard is the president and CEO of Lutheran World Relief, an international humanitarian organization. He previously served in both Republican and Democratic administrations as ambassador to Greece and to Belarus, deputy chief of Mission in Iraq, and a senior official at NATO. He can be reached at president@lwr.org. He wrote this for The Baltimore Sun.

As we mark the fifth anniversary of the Syrian Civil War, it is becoming increasingly evident that the millions of people who have fled their homes will not be returning any time soon.

Traditional humanitarian aid is provided with the expectation that the emergency situation is temporary, and with the case of refugees, in the hope that they will be returning home in the near future. But in the case of Syria, that is clearly not going to happen. And despite all of the media focus on the harrowing stories of the hundreds of thousands of refugees trying to enter the European Union, the vast majority _ more than 95 percent _ are living in the countries immediately bordering Syria. Of the 4.8 million people who have fled the country since 2011, more than 2.7 million are living in Turkey; a little over a million are in tiny Lebanon; more than 630,000 are in Jordan; and nearly 250,000 are in Iraq. An additional 6.6 million Syrians have been displaced from their homes but are still living somewhere in the country.

These Syrian refugees are living in extreme poverty, some in camps or in housing they have found wherever they can in urban communities. As the conflict stretches on, coping mechanisms and humanitarian aid are proving inadequate. Refugees who had savings have largely spent them amid the spiraling cost of living. For refugee families, who have not had access to formal employment opportunities in their host countries, financial resources are hard to come by and living conditions are becoming increasingly dire.

Problems abound for host countries as well. The nations that have admitted the most Syrian refugees have seen their national resources stretched thin. Unemployment, already high before the civil war, has dramatically risen as low-wage workers in these countries are being replaced by Syrians willing to work for less.

Conditions are even harsher for those displaced within Syria. The unrest has strained livelihoods and made food increasingly expensive and difficult to access. As one in three Syrian families has fallen into debt because of food costs, many are desperately trying to make ends meet by selling their possessions, sending their children to work and arranging for the early marriages of their daughters.

For these reasons, we have reached the point where we must make the restoration of livelihoods and access to job opportunities a priority for displaced Syrians to sustain and restore dignified living conditions and reduce their reliance on humanitarian aid.

One strategy that has proven to be very effective in the short term is the provision of cash grants to individuals in exchange for labor that benefits the local community, commonly referred to as Cash for Work. For example, two Baltimore-based international humanitarian agencies, International Orthodox Christian Charities and Lutheran World Relief, are working together to support several local communities in Syria, where there are few jobs or income-generating opportunities, by providing small cash grants to carry out community development projects. This has the advantage of benefiting both individual families as well as the community at large.

While resolving the conflict in Syria is going to take time, there are hopeful signs, including improved humanitarian access in some places as a result of the current cease fire, and the promise of future diplomatic negotiations. It is important to remember that a successful peace agreement will need to address massive humanitarian needs in Syria and neighboring countries, and must include a safe and choreographed return of Syrians to their homes.

While the news headlines focus on the influx of refugees traveling to European countries like Greece, Hungary and Germany, it is developing countries like Jordan and Lebanon, as well as Turkey, that face even bigger challenges and need greater support from the international community. These are also the places where instability caused by the stresses of the huge influx of refugees could further destabilize an already tense region. The United States needs to be bold in increasing our humanitarian support, and be ready to sustain it for some time, if we are to counteract the dangerous forces at play.

MEDICARE

From Page 10

We don't blame them for howling.

But if the cheaper medicine is just as good as the expensive one, then nudging doctors in that direction will save patients—and taxpayers—money.

If the proposal is finalized—public comments are due by May 9—the changes probably wouldn't begin until later this year; the other phase of tests would follow, likely starting in 2017. An incoming administration, Democratic or Republican, may have other, better ideas to accomplish this mission. But we see value in testing these ideas.

We'll know by 2022 if these tests save money and improve health. Medicare officials will have to monitor them closely. If evidence emerges that the changes are damaging patients' health, the feds should pull the plug fast.

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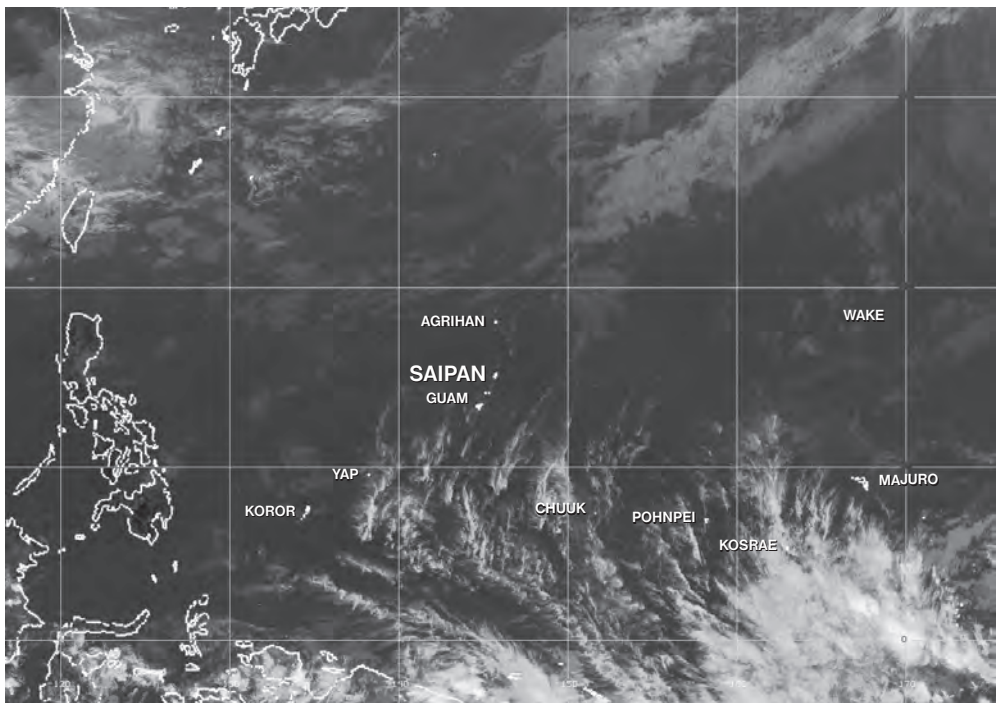
The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of light showers.
▲87° ▼75°	▲87° ▼75°	▲87° ▼75°	▲87° ▼75°	▲87° ▼75°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00 PM, TUESDAY, MARCH 22, 2016
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front stretches southwestward from 25N156E to just north of the Mariana Islands at 20N145E then ending near 19N143E. Clouds and patchy showers are along and up to 150 miles northwest of the front east of 150E and up to 50 miles northwest of the front west of 150E. A trade-wind disturbance is causing scattered showers across Chuuk state mainly between 5N and 8N from 150E to 153E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms from south of Kosrae and Majuro to near Tarawa south of a line from 3N161E to 5N168E to 4N171E to EQ175E.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼76
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼76
Yap	Partly Cloudy	▲90	▼77
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲87	▼81
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	▲87	▼79
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	▲84	▼80
Majuro	Mostly Cloudy	▲84	▼80

Around the Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲74	▼69
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲61	▼31
Hong Kong	Rain	▲70	▼60
Honolulu	Thunderstorms	▲80	▼67
London	Cloudy	▲55	▼41
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲72	▼51
Manila	Sunny	▲95	▼74
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼60
Miami	Mostly Cloudy	▲76	▼67
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲56	▼48
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲64	▼44
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲55	▼40
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲60	▼37
Rome	Showers	▲57	▼49
Salem	Showers	▲56	▼42
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲61	▼49
Seoul	Sunny	▲56	▼31
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲63	▼44
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲63	▼49

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

2:50 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet
8:55 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
3:14 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.5 Feet
8:55 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:19 AM	6:28 PM
Thursday	6:18 AM	6:28 PM
Friday	6:18 AM	6:29 PM
Saturday	6:17 AM	6:29 PM
Sunday	6:16 AM	6:29 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:19 PM	5:59 AM
Thursday	7:06 PM	6:38 AM
Friday	7:53 PM	7:16 AM
Saturday	8:40 PM	7:55 AM
Sunday	9:28 PM	8:35 AM

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 1, 2016

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA2924	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA2922	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA2921	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA2920	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA2928	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA2926	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA2921	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA2921	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ628	3:50am	7:40am	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	5:30am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA2924/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA2924/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	Daily via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2922/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2922/193	8:40am	11:10pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:30pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/183	1:30pm	9:50pm	1, 4, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA2921/193	1:30pm	11:10pm	5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/183	2:20pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA2920/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA2920/193	2:20pm	11:10pm	2 via GUM-ROR
UA2928/183	6:05pm	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2928/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA2928/193	6:05pm	11:10pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA2926/191	9:50pm	7:20am+1	1, 6 via GUM
UA2926/191	9:50pm	9:00am+1	3, 6 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ628/721	3:50am	12:50am	Daily via ICN
UA2922/159	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA2921/159	1:30pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via Rota-GUM
UA2920/159	2:20pm	10:35pm	3, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA2923	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA2925	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA2921	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA2920	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA2927	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA2929	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA2920	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA2920	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:35am	3:10pm	Daily

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ627	9:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10pm	3:30am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA190/2927	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2929	9:55am	9:20pm	2, 6, 7 via GUM
UA190/2927	10:00am	5:35pm	3 via GUM
UA190/2929	10:00am	9:20pm	3 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ702/627	12:30pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA2925	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/2925	10:20pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2920	10:20pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2927	10:20pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA192/2929	10:20pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/2925	11:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2920	11:59pm	1:50pm+1	2, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA184/2927	11:59pm	5:35pm+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/2929	11:59pm	9:20pm+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/627	2:20pm	2:50am+1	Daily via ICN
UA116/2925	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2921	10:55pm	1:00pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA116/2920	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA116/2927	10:55pm	5:35pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA116/2929	10:55pm	9:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
6:30AM	6:45AM	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

OIA offers Summer 2016 internship opportunity in DC

»Applications from post-secondary students will be considered until April 1, 2016

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Internship opportunities for the Summer of 2016 at the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) in Washington, D.C., have been announced by the Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Esther Kia'aina.

Following the successful completion of the first annual OIA Summer Internship Program in 2015, the Assistant Secretary is pleased to again announce the opportunity for post-secondary level students to participate in an Insular Affairs Internship Program for the summer of 2016.

"It is important to provide avenues for young students to learn about how the federal government works given the important role that it plays in the islands," said Kia'aina. "Through our internship program, we aim to build capacity so that participants can consider working for the federal government or have some federal experience under their belt when they return to help their respective communities. Last year's program set the bar and we look forward to welcoming a new cohort this summer."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Office of Insular Affairs Director Pula, M. Moore (Palau), C. Jacobs (U.S. Virgin Islands), Assistant Secretary Kia'aina, F. Solaita (American Samoa), and J. Camacho (CNMI) pose for a group photo.

Student applicants, who have completed two full years of post-secondary study will learn about the workings of Washington, D.C., through first-hand experience at the Office of Insular Affairs, working closely with the Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas on federal issues impacting the insular areas. Those interested may apply online through USAJOBS, Job Announcement OS-1500-16-1B-060(PW). Only U.S. citizens or nationals are eligible to apply.

The application period opens on Monday, March 21, 2016, and closes on Friday, April 1, 2016.

The Department of the Interior is responsible for coordinating federal policy with respect to the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and administering and overseeing U.S. federal assistance provided to the Freely Associated States of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau under the Compacts of Free Association. The Office of Insular Affairs mission is to foster economic opportunities, promote government efficiency, and improve the quality of life for the people of the insular areas. ***(PR)***

NMC chosen to participate in online education initiative

WASHINGTON, D.C.—With generous support from USA Funds, the Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund (APIASF) announced the Enhancing Technology and Online Education at Pacific Island AANAPISIs (E-TOPIA) Project, a new initiative supporting innovative online education at federally-designated Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs) in the Pacific Islands.

Through its Completion with a Purpose initiative, USA Funds has committed support towards innovative projects that increase positive outcomes and provide students a more purposeful path through college and on to rewarding careers and successful lives. As part of APIASF's commitment to supporting positive outcomes for underserved Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students, the organization will partner with Coastline Community College, based in Orange County, California, a leader in online education and distance learning, to support college completion and career transition for students in the Pacific.

"While able to open many doors for accessing educational opportunities, online education requires a specific level of preparedness and structure to ensure students achieve positive outcomes," said Neil Horikoshi, APIASF president and executive director. "With USA Funds' generous support and Coastline Community College's strategic partnership, we are excited to support positive outcomes for students in the Pacific region through the E-TOPIA Project."

All AANAPISI campuses in the Pacific were invited to submit a proposal to participate in the program. Through this process, four partner campuses were selected to participate: Guam Community College (Mangilao, Guam), Leeward Community College (Pearl City, Hawaii), Northern Marianas College (Saipan, Northern Marianas), and Windward Community College (Kaneohe, Hawaii). Each campus will receive a planning grant to support collaborative research with Coastline Community College and a travel grant to attend Coastline's Summer Technology Institute in July, culminating the project's planning phase.

The project will also be guided by an advisory panel including: Rahim Rajan, Senior Program Officer, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Kawika Riley, Founder and CEO, Pacific Islander Access Project; Margaret Daniels Tyler, Managing Partner, The TylerGroup, LLC; Neil Horikoshi, President and Executive Director, APIASF; Dr. Loretta Adrian, President, Coastline Community College; and Lorenzo Esters, Senior Program Director, USA Funds.

"Coastline is honored to have a strong partnership with APIASF," said Dr. Loretta Adrian, Coastline Community College president. "APIASF's E-TOPIA Project is an innovative initiative that promotes collaboration among AANAPISI community colleges for the purpose of sharing, developing, and scaling best practices in online learning for the benefit of, not only AAPI students, but all students. I commend President & Executive Director, Neil Horikoshi, for his vision, and USA Funds for supporting this vision."

"USA Funds is pleased to support this innovative and collaborative new approach for using online learning to enhance the success of underserved students in college and career and to extend our long-standing partnership with APIASF in support of Asian American and Pacific Islander students," said Lorenzo, L. Esters, USA Funds Senior Program Director. "This project aligns with our focus on promoting innovative new practices in the delivery of higher education to increase completion rates, reduce time to degree and enhance affordability."

"Once again APIASF thanks USA Funds for their generous support and commitment to our community," said Neil Horikoshi. "We also thank Dr. Adrian and her team and we are enthusiastic to bring in leaders from Guam Community College, Leeward Community College, Northern Marianas College, and Windward Community College to strengthen each campuses' program and make online education more accessible for students. I congratulate all of our partner campuses on being selected and I thank USA Funds for supporting the launch of this unprecedented project."

For details about APIASF, visit APIASF's website at www.apiasf.org. Also, follow APIASF on Facebook (www.facebook.com/apiasf) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/apiasf). ***(PR)***

UOG MARC to present documentary on Chamoru Creation Story

MARC Seminar will feature screening of I Tinituhon: Rediscovering Fo'na and Pontan, a documentary about the Chamoru creation/origin story on March 29.

The Richard Flores Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center (MARC) at the University of Guam announces the next installment in its seminar series, the screening and discussion of a short documentary entitled, I Tinituhon: Rediscovering Fo'na & Pontan next Tuesday at 6pm in the UOG CLASS Lecture Hall.

The event will open with remarks from Brandon L. Cruz, M.A., who made the film, followed by a chant about the creation story called I Tinituhon by the I Fanlalai'an Oral History Project. Then the short documentary will premiere followed by a panel discussion featuring a diverse panel, who will engage the audience in an open dialogue about the Chamoru creation story and the symbolism behind it. Panel members include, Leonard Iriarte, Sainan Menenhalom Manlålai Chamorro, Jeremy Cepeda, Educator, Manny Cruz, Graduate Student, Videographer, and Rlene Santos-Steffy, Ethnographer, Oral Historian, MARC Research Associate.

"The creation story is an important story that gives insight to a culture and its people," says Cruz, who explained that the various spellings of the two main characters in the creation story have led to differing pronunciations and interpretations of the story over the years.

Considering that historical writings noted various spellings based on the writing system of the observers, Cruz decided to analyze historical and contemporary understandings of the creation story by weaving together linguistic and cultural knowledge from traditional and academic scholars, whom he interviews in the documentary.

"This film aims to provide a more enlightening understanding of the creation story and its main characters for the Taotao Håya," Cruz concludes.

For more information please contact LaVonne Guerrero-Meno at (671) 735-2150 or lavonneg@uguam.uog.edu. ***(PR)***

Partners enhance knowledge of intellectual property rights for Samoan cultural producers

APIA, Samoa—Two government ministries and Pacific regional organizations are partnering to enhance the knowledge of intellectual property rights among cultural producers in a workshop in Apia, Samoa, this week.

Creative and cultural producers are the creative source behind the invention of new songs, performances, fashion designs, crafted products and arts in Samoa and throughout the Pacific.

Piracy, unauthorized use of designs and other intellectual property infringements are significant threats to both the livelihood of individual artists and to the creative industries sector as a whole.

Creators and producers from the performing arts, craft, fashion and visual arts sectors are taking part in the Samoa Creative and Cultural Industries Training: Intellectual Property Rights and Protection training, held as part of the European Union-ACP funded 'Enhancing the Pacific Cultural Industries: Fiji, Samoa, and Solomon Islands' Project.

The workshop (21-23 March) is being co-hosted by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour, the Ministry of Education Sports and Culture, the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Samoa Arts Council.

"The training's aim is to enhance the understanding of intellectual property rights and laws in Samoa so that creative and cultural producers can better protect themselves against infringement," the Deputy-Director of SPC's Social Development Division, Leituala Kuiniselani Toelupe Tago-Elisara, said.

"The training will address specific issues within intellectual property rights, including providing guidance to creative and cultural producers on the processes of copyrights and trademarks," Toelupe Tago-Elisara said.

Guest speakers include representatives of relevant government agencies, such as the newly-established National Prosecution Office, Ministry of Police and Ministry for Revenue and Customs, alongside SPC's Intellectual Property Consultant, Pita K Niubalavu.

Speakers have also been invited from the business community who have established themselves in the cultural industries.

The regional project—a partnership between SPC, PIFS, the European Union, Fiji, Samoa and Solomon Islands—recognizes the contribution of cultural industries to Pacific economies and works to strengthen their position in the economy.

In January, the project supported Samoa's Plantation House to showcase its homewares at NY NOW, an international trade show in New York.

The project is made possible with financial support of the European Union and the assistance of the ACP (Africa Caribbean Pacific) Group of States. ***(PR)***

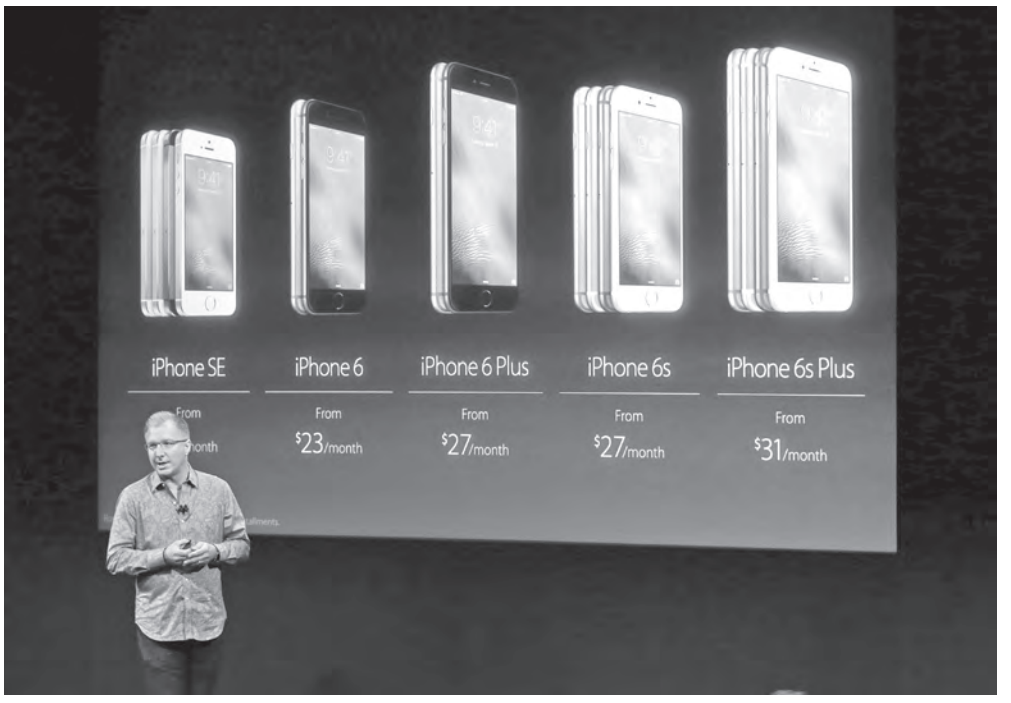
Business

Apple's new iDevices say: Small is beautiful, too

CUPERTINO, Calif. (AP)—As it struggles to match the success of its big-screen iPhones, Apple is now contending that small can be beautiful, too.

The giant tech company showed off downsized versions of its signature iPhone and iPad Pro tablet on Monday, hoping they'll appeal to first-time buyers and those who have shied away from the bigger-screen models Apple has sold in recent years.

At a time when overall smartphone sales are slowing, Apple touted its new four-inch iPhone SE as the "most affordable" new phone the company has offered. While it comes with an upgraded camera, faster processor and other features, the SE has a starting price of $400, or $50 less than the older iPhone 5S that it's replacing. By contrast, the iPhone 6S Plus, which had been Apple's newest and biggest phone, starts at $750.



AP
Greg Joswiak, vice president of iOS, iPad and iPhone product marketing, announces the new iPhone SE at Apple headquarters Monday, March 21, 2016, in Cupertino, Calif.

The company also knocked $50 off the price of its Apple Watch, showed off some new bands for the wearable gadget, and announced some software enhancements for its mobile devices and the Apple TV system.

Apple's spring product event came one day before the tech giant is set to square off with authorities in federal court over the FBI's demand for help unlocking a mass shooter's encrypted iPhone. The dispute has dominated headlines in recent weeks, as Apple CEO Tim Cook acknowledged in brief remarks at the opening of Monday's event.

"We did not expect to be in this position, at odds with our own government," he said. "But we believe strongly that we have a responsibility to help you protect your data and your privacy."

Few of Monday's announcements surprised industry experts. Analysts say Apple clearly hopes the new devices will broaden its appeal and get more people to use the latest versions of its lucrative online services—such as Apple Pay, Apple Music and the mobile App Store—at a time when overall sales of Apple's sleek iDevices are leveling off.

"We're at a point, in a mature market, where it's about having niche products that satisfy different needs," said veteran tech industry watcher Bob O'Donnell of Technalysis Research.

Apple is packing some new features into these smaller packages. The new SE, for example, has the same four-inch screen as the iPhone 5S that Apple began selling in 2013. But the new phone has the company's latest A9 processor, a 12-megapixel camera and a secure chip that allows the use of Apple Pay, the company's digital payment service. Apple Pay was previously only available with iPhone 6 and 6S models.

FBI might have way to unlock attacker's iPhone without Apple

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A much-anticipated court hearing on the federal government's effort to force Apple Inc. to unlock the iPhone used by one of the shooters in the San Bernardino terror attack was abruptly vacated Monday after the FBI revealed it may have a way to access data without the company's help.

Federal prosecutors made the surprising announcement on the eve of Tuesday's hearing in U.S. District Court in Riverside, California. In court papers they said the FBI has been researching methods to access the data on Syed Rizwan Farook's encrypted phone since obtaining it on Dec. 3, the day after the attack.

"An outside party" came forward over the weekend and showed the FBI a possible method, the government said in court papers requesting the hearing be postponed. Authorities need time to determine "whether it is a viable method that will not compromise data" on the phone.

If viable, "it should eliminate the need for the assistance from Apple," according to the filing.

The government did not identify the third party or explain what the proposed method entailed.

Magistrate Judge Sheri Pym granted that request and ordered the government to file a status report by April 5. Pym also stayed her Feb. 16 order compelling Apple to create software that would disable security features on the phone, including one that erases all information if a passcode is incorrectly entered more than 10 times.

In a conference call with reporters, Apple attorneys said it's premature to declare victory in the case because it's possible that authorities could come back in a few weeks and insist they still need the company's help. The attorneys spoke under an Apple policy that wouldn't allow them to be quoted by name.

Ex-Intel CEO Andy Grove dies at age 79

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP)—Andy Grove, the former Intel Corp. chief executive whose youth under Nazi occupation and escape from the Iron Curtain inspired an "only the paranoid survive" management philosophy that saved the chip maker from financial ruin in the 1980s, has died. He was 79.

Intel said Grove died on Monday. It did not specify a cause of death.

Grove, who was instrumental in building Intel into the world's largest chip company during his 37-year career there, had suffered from Parkinson's disease. He also suffered from prostate cancer in the mid-1990s.

Grove

He was a mercurial but visionary leader who helped position Intel's microprocessors as the central technology inside personal computers.

Grove's bet-the-company gamble—moving Intel from memory chips to microprocessors in the mid-1980s to serve what was still a fledgling PC industry—helped rescue Intel from a financial crisis and set it on course to becoming one of the most profitable and important technology companies of all time.

"Andy made the impossible happen, time and again, and inspired generations of technologists, entrepreneurs, and business leaders," Intel CEO Brian Krzanich said Monday.

Robert Burgelman, a professor at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business who started teaching management classes with Grove in the late 1980s, called Grove "one of the most incisive thinkers that I have ever come across." He said Grove's technical and strategic abilities were critical in building Intel and fending off threats from Asian competitors.

"I don't think Intel would have been Intel as we know it, and therefore the U.S. chip industry would not have been what it is" without Grove, Burgelman said.

Intel created the world's first commercial microprocessor in 1971, but the company's primary focus was memory chips for mainframe computers. That was until the personal computer was invented and a new use for Intel's microprocessors emerged.

Google helps offer vastly faster Internet in Cuba

HAVANA (AP)—Google is opening a cutting-edge online technology center at the studio of one of Cuba's most famous artists, offering free Internet at speeds nearly 70 times faster than those now available to the Cuban public. President Barack Obama says Google's efforts in Cuba are part of a wider plan to improve access to the Internet across the island.

The U.S. technology giant has built a studio equipped with dozens of laptops, cellphones and virtual-reality goggles at the complex run by Alexis Leiva Machado, a sculptor known as Kcho. Obama said Sunday that Google was also launching a broader effort to improve Cubans' Internet access across the island.

The company gave no specifics, and Ben Rhodes, deputy national security adviser, said Monday that no further details would be announced during Obama's visit.

In an exclusive tour of the site with The Associated Press on Monday, Google's head of Cuba operations, Brett Perlmutter, said the company was optimistic that the Google+Kcho. Mor studio would be part of a broader cooperative effort to bring Internet access to the Cuban people.

"We want to show the world what happens when you combine Cuban creative energy with technology that's first in class," he said.

The studio will be open five days a week, from 7 a.m. to midnight, for about 40 people at a time, Kcho said.

The project has limited reach but enormous symbolic importance in a country that has long maintained strict control of Internet access, which some Cuban officials sees as a potential national security threat. Officials have described said the Internet as a potential tool for the United States to exert influence over the island's culture and politics.

The connection at the Kcho studio is provided by Cuba's state-run telecommunications company over a new fiber-optic connection and Obama's comments indicate the new Google-Cuba relationship was negotiated at the highest levels of the U.S. and Cuban governments.

Perlmutter declined to comment on any broader plans by the company, but said the Kcho center would feature upload and download speed of 70 megabytes per second. That is blazingly fast in comparison with the public WiFi available to most Cubans for $2, nearly a tenth of the average monthly salary, for an hour of access at roughly 1 megabyte per second.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
17,623.87	2,051.60	4,808.87
+21.57	+2.02	+13.23
0.12%	0.10%	0.28%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.3128	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7539	Philippine Peso	46.1695
British Pound	0.6948	Indian Rupee	66.4699	Singapore Dollar	1.3574
Canadian Dollar	1.3059	Indonesian Rupiah	13130	South Korean Won	1153.705
Chinese Yuan	6.4887	Japanese Yen	112.08	Swiss Franc	0.9693
Euro	0.8883	Malaysian Ringgit	3.9911	Taiwan Dollar	32.427
		New Zealand Dollar	1.4784	Thailand Baht	34.8845

Nation

Obama, Castro lay bare tensions on embargo, human rights

HAVANA (AP)—Laying bare a half-century of tensions, President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro prodded each other Monday over human rights and the longstanding U.S. economic embargo during an unprecedented joint news conference that stunned Cubans unaccustomed to their leaders being aggressively questioned.

The exchanges underscored deep divisions that still exist between the two countries despite rapidly improved relations in the 15 months since Obama and Castro surprised the world with an announcement to end their Cold War-era diplomatic freeze.

Obama, standing in Havana's Palace of the Revolution on the second day of his historic visit to Cuba, repeatedly pushed Castro to take steps to address his country's human rights record.

"We continue, as President Castro indicated, to have some very serious differences, including on democracy and human rights," said Obama, who planned to meet with Cuban dissidents Tuesday. Still, Obama heralded a "new day" in the U.S.-Cuba relationship and said "part of normalizing relations means we discuss these differences directly."

AP

Cuban President Raul Castro, right, lifts up the arm of President Barack Obama at the conclusion of their joint news conference at the Palace of the Revolution, Monday, March 21, 2016, in Havana, Cuba.

Castro was blistering in his criticism of the American embargo, which he called "the most important obstacle" to his country's economic development. He also pressed Obama to return the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay, which is on the island of Cuba, to his government.

"There are profound differences between our countries that will not go away," Castro said plainly.

White House officials spent weeks pushing their Cuban counterparts to agree for the leaders to take questions from reporters after their private meeting, reaching agreement just hours before Obama and Castro appeared before cameras. It's extremely rare for Castro to give a press conference, though he has sometimes taken questions from reporters spontaneously when the mood strikes.

While the issue of political prisoners is hugely important to Cuban-Americans and the international community, most people on the island are more concerned about the shortage of goods and their struggles with local bureaucracy.

Castro appeared agitated at times during the questioning, professing to not understand whether inquiries were directed to him.

But when an American reporter asked about political prisoners in Cuba, he pushed back aggressively, saying if the journalist could offer names of anyone improperly imprisoned, "they will be released before tonight ends."

"What political prisoners? Give me a name or names," Castro said.

Veterans are using pot to ease PTSD, despite scant research

TRENTON, N.J. (AP)—A growing number of states are weighing whether to legalize marijuana to treat post-traumatic stress disorder. But for many veterans, the debate is already over.

They're increasingly using cannabis even though it remains illegal in most states and is unapproved by the Department of Veterans Affairs because major studies have yet to show it is effective against PTSD.

While the research has been contradictory and limited, some former members of the military say pot helps them manage their anxiety, insomnia and nightmares. Prescription drugs such as Klonopin and Zoloft weren't effective or left them feeling like zombies, some say.

"I went from being an anxious mess to numbing myself with the pills they were giving me," said Mike Whiter, a 39-year-old former Marine who lives in Philadelphia, where marijuana is illegal. "Cannabis helped me get out of the hole I was in. I started to talk to people and get over my social anxiety."

Others, though, have seen little benefit from the drug. And the VA has documented a troubling rise in the number of PTSD-afflicted veterans who have been diagnosed with marijuana dependence, which some experts say can hamper recovery from war trauma.

Sally Schindel, of Prescott, Arizona, said the VA diagnosed her son Andy Zorn with PTSD after he served in the Army in Iraq. The agency later diagnosed him with marijuana dependence as well as depression and bipolar disorder, she said.

Schindel said her son was using marijuana not for recreation but as self-medication, particularly to help him sleep. He killed himself at age 31 in 2014, writing in his suicide note that "marijuana killed my soul & ruined my brain."

"He told me he found it much harder to quit than he thought it would be," Schindel said. "He'd buy it and smoke it and then flush the rest of it. The next day he bought it again."

The stories of vets like Zorn and Whiter have helped fuel the debate over whether states and the federal government should legalize the drug for PTSD treatment. Lawmakers are increasingly sympathizing with vets like Whiter, despite the lack of scientific evidence. While some limited studies have shown that marijuana helps people manage PTSD symptoms in the short term, another suggested it may make symptoms worse.

Trump demands GOP embrace him as Dems unleash new attacks

WASHINGTON (AP)—A front-runner under attack from all sides, Republican Donald Trump demanded that his party's skeptical establishment embrace the inevitability of his presidential nomination as he stormed into Washington on Monday. Democrats responded by debuting a multi-pronged assault, shifting their rhetoric and resources against the man they expect to face in a contentious and ugly general election campaign.

"If people want to be smart, they should embrace this movement," Trump declared at a news conference, shrugging off passionate resistance to his candidacy from both parties.

"I'm an outsider," Trump said. "They're not used to this."

As he often is, Trump was dogged by protests. A group of rabbis said they were boycotting his evening speech to a pro-Israel lobbying group as protesters gathered outside.

Democratic presidential front-runner Hillary Clinton touched off her party's fresh anti-Trump campaign during a morning foreign policy speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Conference, questioning the former reality television star's readiness to guide the nation through delicate international entanglements.

"We need steady hands," Clinton told thousands at the pro-Israel gathering. "Not a president who says he's neutral on Monday, pro-Israel on Tuesday and who-knows-what on Wednesday because everything's negotiable."

Israel's security, she proclaimed, "is non-negotiable."

Trump kindled criticism from Republicans as well as Democrats earlier in the year when he pledged to be "sort of a neutral guy" on Israel. While the U.S. is officially neutral in the Middle East conflict, his statement marked a rhetorical departure for U.S. presidential candidates.

Getting a second chance to face pro-Israel activists, Trump on Monday promised there would be "no daylight between America and our most reliable ally, the state of Israel" in his administration. But he also repeatedly referred to "Palestine" instead of the "Palestinian territories" as he read from prepared remarks, using a term many pro-Israel activists oppose.

Rival candidate Ted Cruz, following him at the conference, jabbed Trump for that reference, saying Palestine "hasn't existed since 1948."

Health insurance gains due to Obama's law, not economy

WASHINGTON (AP)—There's growing evidence that most of the dramatic gain in the number of Americans with health care coverage is due to President Barack Obama's law, and not the gradual recovery of the nation's economy.

That could pose a political risk for Republicans running against "Obamacare" in the GOP primaries as they shift to the general election later this year. While the health care law remains highly unpopular in the party, the prospect of taking away health care coverage from millions of people could trigger a backlash if the eventual GOP nominee's plan to replace it is seen as coming up short.

"There are different phases of the campaign," said GOP pollster Bill McInturff. Playing to like-minded voters in the primaries, Republican front-runner Donald Trump doesn't have to spell how he'd replace Obama's law. "When you get to the general election, the demand for what you are going to do different starts to escalate."

Under "Obamacare," the share of Americans without health insurance has dropped to a historic low of about 9 percent, with room to go even lower. But even as the economy has expanded, major government surveys point to a lackluster rebound for employer-based coverage.

"It's very clear that the Affordable Care Act has done most of the work in decreasing the number of uninsured," said economist Robert Kaestner of the University of Illinois at Chicago.

The numbers vary across different government surveys, but the overall pattern is strikingly similar:

■ The Census Bureau's American Community Survey found about 3 million more people gained employer coverage between 2010, when the health law passed, and 2014. But the number of uninsured people dropped by more than 10 million during that same period. The strongest gains appeared to come from Medicaid, which was expanded under Obama's law. The percentage of Americans covered by employers stayed about the same.

■ The National Health Interview Survey from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also found that employer coverage was essentially flat between 2010 and 2014. But the same survey found 12.6 million more people with health insurance during that period.

■ The Census Bureau's Current Population Survey found no statistically significant change in the number of people covered by employers from 2013 to 2014, while the number of uninsured people dropped by nearly 9 million as the law's main coverage expansion got under way during that time.

Asia

Breaking taboo, Hindu widows celebrate festival of colors

AP

Indian Hindu widows throw flower petals and colored powder during Holi celebrations at the Gopinath temple, 180 kilometres (112 miles) south-east of New Delhi, India Monday, March 21, 2016.

VRINDAVAN, India (AP)—Aruna Samaddar threw fistfuls of colored powder into the air. Blue and red and green, the cheerful colors settled on her white sari and all over other women nearby.

In most of India, widows like Samaddar have no place in this joyful celebration of Holi, the Hindu festival of colors. The country's millions of observant Hindu widows are expected to live out their days in quiet worship, dressed only in white. They are typically barred from all religious festivities because their very presence is considered inauspicious.

So for Samaddar, Monday's celebration was a joy long denied.

"I am so happy. I am playing Holi after 12 years. I am happy, very happy," said Samaddar, who appeared to be in her early 30s. The powder made her white sari and those of the widows around her shimmer in myriad colors.

So deep is the ostracization of widows that they're often shunned by their families and forced to seek shelter in temples.

The holy city of Vrindavan, in India's Uttar Pradesh state, is known as the City of Widows because it has given so many women shelter. And in recent years, widows have found a bit of color and joy here as well.

Aid group Sulabh International has been organizing regular Holi celebrations in Vrindavan since 2013. Samaddar and more than 1,000 other widows gathered in the courtyard of one of the city's oldest temples—devoted to Krishna, the most playful of the Hindu gods. The festival of Holi falls on Thursday this year, but in Vrindavan and many other parts of the country, the playing of colors begins a week ahead.

Hindu priests chanted religious verses as hundreds of widows splashed colored powders and played with water pistols filled with colored water. Showers of flower petals filled the air.

As loud music blasted, the younger women jostled with each other as they played with the colors.

For dozens of older women, years of social conditioning proved hard to break. They applied only tiny dots of color to each other's foreheads.

"Their participation in Holi symbolizes a break from tradition, which forbids a widow from wearing a colored sari, among many other things," said Bindeshwar Pathak, the head of Sulabh International.

Sulabh was asked to oversee the lives of widows of the city by India's Supreme Court following news reports of the widows being forced to beg for food and into prostitution. While there are tens of thousands of widows in Vrindavan, the group has been appointed caretaker for about 1,500.

Seoul: North Korea fires 5 short-range projectiles

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea fired five short-range projectiles into the sea on Monday, Seoul officials said, in a continuation of weapon launches it has carried out in an apparent response to ongoing South Korea-U.S. military drills it sees as a provocation.

The projectiles launched from a site near the northeastern city of Hamhung flew about 200 kilometers (125 miles) before landing in waters off North Korea's east coast, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said.

The South Korean military was attempting to determine whether the projectiles were missiles, artillery or rockets.

The firings came three days after Seoul said North Korea launched its first medium-range ballistic missile into the sea since early 2014, ignoring U.N. resolutions against such tests.

The firings appear to be North Korea's response to annual springtime U.S.-South Korean military exercises that it says are a rehearsal for an invasion. In the past two weeks North Korea has fired several short-range missiles and artillery shells into the sea and threatened pre-emptive nuclear strikes against Washington and Seoul.

This year's drills are the largest ever, and come after North Korea conducted a nuclear test and a long-range rocket launch earlier this year, leading the U.N. Security Council to impose its toughest sanctions on the country in two decades.

The U.S. special representative for North Korean policy, Sung Kim, who is visiting Seoul, said Monday that North Korea "should refrain from all provocative actions, including missile tests, which are clearly in violation of Security Council resolutions."

On Sunday, North Korean state TV broadcast photos showing leader Kim Jong Un supervising landing and defensive drills. The photos showed artillery blazing, navy ships landing as shells fell nearby, and soldiers running with the national flag. North Korea has a history of photo manipulation and there was no way to verify the authenticity of the photos.

Last week, state media said Kim ordered tests of a nuclear warhead and ballistic missiles capable of carrying such warheads. He issued the orders while overseeing what state media called a successful simulated test of a re-entry vehicle aimed at returning a nuclear warhead to the atmosphere from space so it could hit its intended target. The re-entry vehicle is considered one of the last major technologies North Korea must master to develop long-range missiles equipped with nuclear weapons capable of reaching the U.S. mainland.

Analysts in South Korea said the medium-range missile launch last Friday may have been a test of the re-entry technology. North Korean state media have not commented on the reported launch.

South Korean defense officials say North Korea doesn't yet have functioning intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Indonesia protests China's retrieval of illegal fishing ship

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Indonesia on Monday protested the Chinese coast guard's retrieval of a ship while it was detained for fishing illegally in Indonesian waters.

An Indonesian fisheries ministry patrol ship had intercepted the Chinese vessel on Saturday within Indonesia's exclusive economic zone which overlaps with the southernmost reaches of the South China Sea, according to Indonesia. Eight crewmen were detained.

The fishing vessel Kway Fey was being towed when a Chinese coastguard vessel collided with it, allowing its escape.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi told reporters after meeting with a senior Chinese diplomat that China's coast guard "violated our sovereignty" and called on China to respect international law.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said the Chinese ship was being "harassed" by an armed Indonesian vessel. Hua said the incident occurred within traditional Chinese fishing grounds and that the coast guard ship moved to assist the fishing trawler without entering Indonesian territorial waters.

"China immediately urged Indonesia to release the arrested Chinese fishermen and protect their life safety. We hope Indonesia can make joint efforts with China to properly handle this case, considering the general landscape of the China-Indonesia relations," Hua said.

Indonesia has destroyed dozens of foreign ships for illegally fishing in its waters, and maritime and fisheries minister Susi Pudjiastuti called on Beijing to stand against illegal and unregulated fishing.

Local media reported a Chinese patrol vessel also snatched back a detained Chinese ship from Indonesian control in 2013.

China's expansive claims to most of the South China Sea have raised tensions with its Southeast Asian neighbors, especially as China reclaims land on reefs and builds infrastructure in disputed areas. Indonesia is not involved in the territorial disputes and Marsudi said that had not changed.

Beijing has sought to discourage Indonesia, a leading member of the 10-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations, from joining fellow members Vietnam and the Philippines in challenging China's sea claims.

Indonesian authorities are concerned an increasingly assertive China might enlarge its claims to include the Natuna Islands. Indonesia's military chief has said it was strengthening its forces there. Hua reiterated Monday that China does not challenge Indonesia's ownership of the Natunas.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Myanmar president to include Aung San Suu Kyi in his Cabinet

NAYPYITAW, Myanmar (AP)—Myanmar's president-elect on Tuesday proposed an 18-member Cabinet that will include party leader Aung San Suu Kyi, the former dissident who for decades had campaigned for a democratically elected government to replace the country's military junta. President-elect Htin Kyaw submitted the list of the names to the parliament for formal approval. The Cabinet positions of the ministers will be decided later. Notable, and top on the list is Suu Kyi, who was not able to become president because of a constitutional block, even though she led her party to a landslide win in general elections last November. The names will be reviewed by the parliament and the speaker of the parliament will ask the legislators on Wednesday to approve the names. If any lawmaker disagrees with a name, it will be reviewed. It was widely rumored that Suu Kyi will become the foreign minister, but that's far from certain because if she were to take that post she would have to give up her parliament seat and end party activities.

Elephants kill 5 people in 2 attacks in eastern India

KOLKATA, India (AP)—Elephants have killed five people in two separate attacks in eastern India. One of the animals died after being tranquilized. Senior forest official Ajay Das said one man was killed Monday morning after he walked out of his home in a village in the Burdwan district of West Bengal state. The man encountered five elephants, and he was tossed in the air and trampled by one of them. In a separate encounter Sunday in another part of the district, four people were killed when three elephants attacked them. Das said one elephant in that group was tranquilized and later died. An adult female and a calf ran away.

Police charge 2 people in Sydney with funding Islamic State

SYDNEY (AP)—Police on Tuesday charged a 20-year-old man and a 16-year-old school girl in Sydney with raising money for the Islamic State group. The pair were arrested in the western suburb of Guildford, New South Wales Deputy Police Commissioner Catherine Burn said. They were to appear in a Sydney court on Tuesday charged with financing terrorism, an offense which carries a potential maximum 25 year prison sentence, she said. "There is a lot of work being done to identify particularly young people, particularly people who are of school age and who are getting involved in activities that they should not be getting involved in," Burn told reporters. Australian Federal Police Deputy Commissioner Michael Phelan said 14 people had now been charged under Operation Appleby counterterrorism investigation since 2014.

World

Witness, funeral helped lead police to Paris attacks suspect

BRUSSELS (AP)—A keen-eyed witness who spotted a pale, slender figure fleeing an apartment near a Brussels auto plant one week ago set in motion a vast police dragnet that within 72 hours led to the capture of Salah Abdeslam, the most-wanted man in Europe.

Another key—if unwitting—helper in leading authorities to the hideout of their high-value quarry was a pallbearer at the burial of the fugitive's brother.

Abdeslam is being held in a Belgian high-security prison, with France seeking his extradition so he can stand trial for his alleged role in the Nov. 13 rampage of gunfire and suicide bombings that killed 130 people.

The 26-year-old Frenchman was arrested Friday after being run to ground by investigators in the same gritty Molenbeek neighborhood of Brussels where he grew up. Much remains unclear about Abdeslam's movements in the four months he managed to elude authorities multiple times.

AP

In this Friday, March 18, 2016 photo made available Monday March 21, an unidentified man believed to be connected to key suspect in the November 2015 Paris attacks Salah Abdeslam, is detained by police during a raid in the Molenbeek neighborhood of Brussels, Belgium.

"We're still far from completing the puzzle," Belgian federal prosecutor Frederic Van Leeuw acknowledged Monday.

The fugitive's luck began to run out on the afternoon of March 15, when a six-member police team showed up to search an apartment believed linked to the Paris attackers, according to government and security officials.

The joint Belgian-French search party thought the residence near an Audi factory in south Brussels was vacant because the water and power had been turned off for weeks. But as soon as they opened the door, they were fired on from inside by at least two people wielding a Kalashnikov assault rifle and a riot gun, officials said.

In the melee, four police officers were slightly wounded, and two occupants of the apartment managed to slip away, reportedly via the rooftop.

One witness got a good enough look at one of the escapees to describe him to a police sketch artist, said Ahmed El Khannouss, the first deputy mayor of Molenbeek.

The portrait that resulted "bore a very strong resemblance to Salah Abdeslam," El Khannouss said. Forensic scientists found Abdeslam's fingerprints in the apartment.

There also was the body of a suspected Abdeslam accomplice who was shot and killed by a police sniper as the gunman prepared to fire on police from a window, along with a Kalashnikov, a stockpile of ammunition, and a banner of the Islamic State extremist group.

That's what Belgian authorities made public. What they didn't disclose, said former French intelligence agent Claude Moniquet, was that they also recovered cellphones that quickly told them who the apartment's occupants had contacted.

Now that his cover had been blown, "the working assumption of the police was that Abdeslam would go to a place he knew," said Moniquet, director of the Brussels-based European Strategic Intelligence and Security Center. Most likely, that meant Molenbeek, home to one of the largest North African communities in Belgium and the area where Abdeslam grew up with several of the Paris attackers.

Greece sets up detention camps as refugee deal hits delays

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—Greece detained hundreds of refugees and migrants on its islands Monday, as officials in Athens and the European Union conceded a much-heralded agreement to send thousands of asylum-seekers back to Turkey is facing delays.

Migrants who arrived after the deal took effect Sunday were being led to previously open refugee camps on the islands of Lesbos and Chios and held in detention, authorities on the islands said.

EU countries are trying to avoid a repeat of the mass migration in 2015, when more than a million people entered the bloc. Most were fleeing civil war in Syria and other conflicts, traveling first to Turkey and then to the nearby Greek islands in dinghies and small boats. Efforts to limit migration have run into multiple legal and practical obstacles.

Under the deal, Greek authorities will detain and return newly arrived refugees to Turkey. The EU will settle more refugees directly from Turkey and speed up financial aid to Ankara. The two sides, however, are still working out how migrants will be sent back.

"We are conscious of the difficulties," EU Commission spokesman Margaritis Schinas said in Brussels.

"And we are working 24-7 to make sure that everything that needs to be in place for this agreement to be implemented soon is happening."

Commission officials said support staff needed to implement the deal—including hundreds of translators and migration officers—would not start arriving until next week. Returns, they said, cannot start until Greece changes its law to recognize Turkey as a "safe country" for asylum applications.

The human rights group Amnesty International sharply criticized the plan.

"Turkey does not offer adequate protection to anyone," Iverna McGowan, the head of Amnesty's EU office, told The Associated Press, accusing Turkey of routinely forcing Syrians back across the border.

Migrants, meanwhile, continued to reach Greek islands in large numbers, as smugglers appeared to be opting for more overnight crossings and increasingly dangerous routes.

Gunmen attack EU mission in Mali capital; 1 attacker dead

BAMAKO, Mali (AP)—Gunmen launched an attack Monday evening on the European Union military training mission's headquarters in the Malian capital, Bamako, in what appeared to be the latest in a series of attacks on Western interests in the region.

Armed forces killed at least one man, who lay outside the hotel in jeans and a shirt in a pool of blood next to a Kalashnikov rifle. His backpack lay beside him.

Cmdr. Modibo Naman Traore, a spokesman for the Malian special forces, said three other attackers were still being sought. As of late Monday, no group had claimed responsibility.

Sgt. Baba Dembele from the anti-terrorism unit in Bamako told an Associated Press reporter at the scene that it was believed some attackers had entered the Hotel Nord-Sud, where the mission is headquartered.

The EU training mission later released a statement saying it had come under attack by small arms fire but no personnel had been wounded, and that Malian security forces were securing the area.

EU soldiers, the Malian army, national police and other security forces stood outside the hotel.

The assault comes about four months after jihadis attacked the Radisson Blu hotel in Mali's capital, killing 20 people. Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and al-Mourabitoun claimed responsibility for that attack, saying it was their first joint attack since al-Mourabitoun joined al-Qaida's North Africa branch in 2015.

In January, extremists from the same militant groups attacked a cafe near a hotel popular with foreigners in Burkina Faso's capital, killing at least 30 people. And just last week, al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb claimed responsibility for an assault on a beach in Ivory Coast that left at least 19 dead, identifying the three attackers as members of al-Mourabitoun and Sahara units.

This week marks the fourth anniversary of the coup that unleashed widespread chaos in Mali. After the overthrow of the democratically elected president, extremists in the northern half of Mali took over major towns and began implementing their strict interpretation of Islamic law. The amputations and public whippings only ended when a French-led military mission forced them from power in 2013.

Over the past year, the jihadis have mounted a growing wave of violent attacks against U.N. peacekeepers who are trying to help stabilize the country.

Russia says might use force on cease-fire violators in Syria

MOSCOW (AP)—Russia on Monday warned the United States that it will start responding unilaterally to cease-fire violations in Syria if the U.S. refuses to coordinate rules of engagement against violators. The U.S. State Department insisted that Moscow and Washington were working constructively to monitor the truce and warned Russia against taking unilateral action.

The Russian military has accused the U.S. of dragging its feet on responding to Moscow's proposals on rules for joint monitoring of the Syria cease-fire and response to violations. It said that further delays are leading to civilian casualties.

Lt. Gen. Sergei Rudskoi of the Russian General Staff said in a statement on Monday that if the U.S. fails to respond to its proposals on a joint response, the Russian military will have to start unilaterally using force against those who break the cease-fire, starting Tuesday.

The Russian Foreign Ministry issued a separate but similar statement.

In Washington, State Department spokesman John Kirby said the U.S. and Russia were working together to collect and analyze information about cease-fire violations, and that any unilateral Russian action to punish transgressors goes against "the spirit of the cessation of hostilities."

"There has been coordination," Kirby told reporters, saying these matters "continue to be discussed in a constructive manner." But he said no action has been taken against truce violators thus far.

"Our expectation is that Russia will refrain from unilateral actions," Kirby stressed, saying the cessation of hostilities is holding despite some breaches. There is "no reason for anybody to say that there needs to be unilateral action taken."

In Geneva, the U.N. special envoy for Syria, whose office is helping monitor cease-fire violations in Syria, said he was "extremely supportive" of U.S. and Russian cooperation to help bolster a peace process for the war-torn country. Staffan de Mistura pointed to the unprecedented "operation center" that is designed to help the two powers' military and civilian experts to "cooperate in containing the crisis."

Focus

Fearful of China's reach abroad, dissidents try risky voyage

By PENNY WANG and DIDI TANG
ASSOCIATED PRESS

AP

In this photo taken March 2, 2016, and provided by Zhang Hong, Chinese asylum seekers, from left to right: Dong Junming, Li Mingwei, Li Shaojun, Song Zhiyu, Li Yusheng, Li Xiaolong, Gu Qiao, Li Weimin and Zhang Wei; pose for a photo in front of the yacht they used in a failed attempt to reach New Zealand from Thailand after they ran ashore in Chumphon province in southern Thailand.

BANGKOK (AP)—Dong Junming was detained several times in his Chinese homeland before he and his family fled to Bangkok in February 2015. A year later, he was preparing to make a more desperate journey to evade Chinese authorities who still felt dangerously close.

In the months since he arrived in Thailand, dozens of Chinese asylum-seekers have been sent back home by Thai authorities. Other dissidents have simply disappeared from Thailand and Hong Kong before re-emerging in mainland Chinese custody. Beijing appears increasingly eager to snatch back countrymen who have attempted to escape its grasp.

Dong is a practitioner of the Falun Gong spiritual movement, which is banned in China and whose members are persecuted there. He, his wife and daughter have a long wait to obtain refugee status and get resettled in a third country—they won't even interview with the U.N. refugee agency until at least 2017. In the meantime, he's unable to work legally and his family's travel documents have expired.

So Dong decided to flee once more. This time it would be by boat, to New Zealand, some 6,000 miles away. The country is so isolated that, as far as authorities know, not one refugee boat has successfully reached its shores.

He would leave with six other Chinese adults, including a couple taking their two sons, ages 1 and 7. They believed New Zealand offered them the best chance of gaining refugee status.

Dong, as well as eight other Chinese dissidents living in Thailand who did not make the boat journey, described lives of anxiety and frustration bordering on outright despair in interviews with The Associated Press. Though free and under no immediate deportation threat, Dong said he feared what the future might bring. So when offered a berth on the yacht in January, he took it.

"It's highly risky out there on the ocean, but we are so fearful here in Thailand that I thought I should take the risk," he said.

Dong and fellow travelers boarded the yacht the night of Feb. 29. The captain was democracy activist Li Xiaolong, the father of both children aboard. He bought the second-hand vessel, which also carried his wife and two brothers.

They had a month's supply of food and water. Their confidence was boosted by a fellow activist who succeeded in making a shorter sea voyage from Thailand to Australia.

They believed their own journey would be smooth. They were wrong.

■■■

Fears over the growing reach of Chinese security services crystallized among many Chinese dissidents with the recent disappearances of people associated with a Hong Kong bookstore that sold gossipy titles on the lives of Chinese leaders. One of the missing was believed to have been abducted from Thailand, another from Hong Kong, though both have since said they voluntarily returned to mainland China.

Asylum-seekers in Thailand were more alarmed that the Thai government sent back about 100 asylum-seekers from China's Turkic Muslim Uighur minority last summer, and repatriated two Chinese dissidents in November, saying they violated immigration rules. Critics viewed Thailand's military-led government as catering to China, its biggest trading partner.

With President Xi Jinping at China's helm and brimming with confidence, the communist government is pursuing greater cooperation with police abroad.

One aspect of the campaign popular within China is Beijing's Skynet operation, which seeks the return of corrupt Chinese officials and others accused of absconding overseas with ill-gotten gains. Since October 2014, China has seen the return of 124 corruption suspects who had fled to 34 countries, the country's chief justice told the national legislature this month.

That campaign has had limited success in the U.S., which has no extradition treaty with China and requires evidence that the offences they are accused of by China would also constitute a crime in America.

Beijing has raised the heat not only on corruption suspects but also on dissidents who fled China. Forced repatriations and alleged abductions have particularly rattled Chinese asylum-seekers who have congregated in Thailand, where the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees has an office.

"Beijing has become so ruthless that it grants us no way out at all," said Hu Junxiong, a democracy activist who fled to Thailand last year, after Chinese authorities detained him 35 days for helping other activists with computer and technology issues.

"It won't let us flee, but stays on our tail to catch us and bring us back to China, where we surely will be met with harsh persecutions and end up in misery," Hu said in an interview from Bangkok.

■■■

The yacht set off from Pattaya, southeast of Bangkok. Dong's wife and daughter stayed in Thailand because the family's funds were limited and, since their visas had expired, they were at risk of being detained by Thai authorities.

The next day, the vessel was battling waves up to 5 meters (16 feet) tall, Dong said.

About 135 kilometers (84 miles) into the journey, a problem emerged with the yacht's steering. One of those aboard managed to fix it, but after another 100 kilometers (62 miles) the waves returned and the rudder went out again, Dong recalled.

"The boat was spinning, and it was shaking violently," Dong said. "We were still 100 kilometers (62 miles) from the closest shore."

They turned the boat toward shore and manually operated the rudder. Their distress calls went unanswered.

"I was extremely fearful," Dong said. "We were in lifejackets, and I was so sick I could not get up."

The baby and his brother were quiet, Dong recalled.

"The little one had his eyes wide open and did not cry at all. The older one was simply lying there. I did not know if he was scared or was feeling numb. Their mother was vomiting and could not do anything."

Deep into the night of March 1, the yacht ran aground in southern Thailand's Chumphon province.

The boat was taking on water and listed on the shore. After waves gradually pushed it to an upright position, the adults waded to land, fetched the children and called for help, Dong said.

"Our boat could have sunk out there," Dong said in an interview from Bangkok. "We are lucky to be alive."

■■■

Thailand is home to thousands of asylum-seekers from China and elsewhere, many of whom live under murky legal status. Even those who enter the country legally often overstay their visas. Thailand has no law managing asylum-seekers fleeing conflict and persecution.

Activists say Thai authorities used to look the other way on Chinese asylum-seekers, but that changed after the May 2014 military coup.

Thai government spokesman Sansern Kaewkamnerd said authorities follow the rules when sending illegal immigrants back to their countries of origin. "If we don't, Thailand might become a hub for smugglers to transport people to third countries and we wouldn't want that," he said.

Vivian Tan, spokesperson for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees in Thailand, said asylum-seekers are often caught up in routine illegal-immigration crackdowns. Although the U.N. office has no control over how Thailand enforces immigration rules, it works with authorities to help asylum-seekers avoid being detained, Tan said.

Some Chinese refugees fear Chinese agents as well as Thai authorities.

Hu, who traveled to Thailand without identification last year, said someone claiming to be a Chinese diplomat called him and said the embassy monitored local activists' phone calls. He said the caller asked him to inform on fellow asylum-seekers.

"I think it's part of (Beijing's) plan to turn us against each other," Hu said.

The Chinese Embassy in Bangkok said it had no knowledge of Chinese authorities conducting surveillance on dissidents in Thailand.

As they wait for years to be recognized as refugees, Chinese asylum-seekers say they survive by dipping into meager savings and practicing extreme frugality. They avoid police at all costs, even if they're victimized.

On the night the ill-fated journey to New Zealand ended, however, hiding was not an option.

■■■

Of the seven adults who took part in the failed voyage, two - including Li's wife, Gu Qiao—were detained for not having valid documents; they remained in Thai custody this week. Li, the trip's organizer, was charged with aiding undocumented immigrants but later released on bail.

The 1-year-old traveler is also in state custody. The 7-year-old was returned to Li's brothers, who also had been on the boat. Like Dong and one other passenger, the brothers were freed when their documents were found to be in order.

"Now, I am back to live in fear again," Dong said. "I am back to wait for the U.N. interview, and I feel hopeless."

His family lives as simply as they can. Once rent is paid, their monthly budget leaves them with just 500 baht ($14), his wife, Wang Shumei said. They pick through vegetables discarded from farmers' markets, and sometimes sellers give them food out of pity, she said. And they practice Falun Gong meditation exercises.

"Should there be another opportunity, I would leave Thailand again," Dong said. "And many of us have the same thought."

Good Housekeeping

DIGGIN' IN: Garden stalwarts from the other side of the globe

MCT
Giant dragons and exotic buildings are part of the LanternAsia exhibit open now through April 30 at Norfolk Botanical Garden in Norfolk.

MCT
Ginko Tree.

By KATHY VAN MULLEKOM
DAILY PRESS (NEWPORT NEWS, VA.)

Art by day…magic by night.

That's the simple description of "LanternAsia," an exhibit of Chinese art you can see at Norfolk Botanical Garden now through April 30.

The simplicity stops there.

"There are more than 30 scenes in this one-mile walking tour," says Kelly Welsh, marketing and communications director at the botanical garden in Norfolk, Va.

"During the day, witness the craftsmanship and detail of this magnificent art. By night, the sculptures light up the night. It's really two different experiences."

The exhibit also provides insight into the many Asian plant collections at the botanical garden—www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org.

"When you think about the plant pallet that makes up the typical southeastern Virginia garden, it is amazing just how many of them come from East Asia," says Les Parks, curator of herbaceous plants at the botanical garden.

"Nandinas, crape myrtles, hydrangeas, azaleas, liriope, Chinese hollies, Japanese hollies and many other plants are so common one might mistakenly consider them native."

Why are so many of these stalwarts of the local landscape from the other side of the globe?

"Simple—they come from a climate so similar to Hampton Roads Virginia—hot humid summers, adequate rain, and relatively mild winters—that they thrive here.

"Just because they thrive here doesn't mean we should ignore our own native plants. Both can be part of a diverse garden."

Asian beauties

Here are three Asian plants at Norfolk Botanical Garden that relate to the LanternAsia exhibit, according to Les Parks:

■ Tea Camellia, or Camellia sinensis

The tea camellia is native to broadleaved evergreen forests in China and in neighboring countries of Southeast Asia, according to Parks. Tea is made from the vegetative buds and young leaves of Camellia sinensis. The tea camellia can be a worthy addition to Southern gardens. It is usually the first camellia to bloom, sometime in October, with small white flowers surrounding a yellow boss of stamens. The small to medium height shrubs are usually very cold hardy in Hampton Roads, and prefer well drained soils in partly shaded gardens. Cold hardy to Zone 6.

MCT
Tea Camellia.

■ Japanese Maple, or Acer palmatum

Norfolk Botanical Garden is a great place for "momiji-gari," or "maple tree viewing." Japanese culture recognizes viewing the fall color of maples as a significant spiritual experience … one with nature, according to Parks. In the 8th century, maples began appearing in Japanese poetry, and are synonymous with some of the most famous Japanese works of art. Japanese maples are the most commonly used tree for bonsai, and Japan takes maple leaves one step further — eating them! The harvested leaves are deep fried in a yummy tempura batter. Acer palmatum may be native to Japan, North and South Korea, eastern Mongolia and southeastern Russia, but there is no doubt that Japan has the strongest connection to this magnificent tree, says Parks. Cold hardy to Zone 5.

■ Ginkgo/Maidenhair Tree, or Ginkgo biloba

The gingko tree is truly a living fossil—250 million years ago, well before the dinosaurs, ginkgo species grew worldwide and were a bridge between primitive and modern plant forms, according to Parks. Today there is only one species left, which is native to China, though there is some doubt that any remain in the wild. However, the tree is widely planted around the world, and is chiefly valued for its beautiful fall foliage and resilient nature. Female trees produce a fruit whose flesh has a very disagreeable odor, but the nut inside can be roasted and eaten. In traditional and modern medicine it is used to address a variety of cognitive complaints. Though they are slow, ginkgoes are adaptable, easy to grow and can live for centuries, says Parks. Cold hardy to Zone 4.

LIVING SMART: How to stage a home in 15 minutes

By STACI GIORDULLO
ANGIE'S LIST

Keeping the house clean, tidy and show-ready can seem like a never-ending task. Yet, that's exactly what you're expected to do once you list your house on the real estate market.

Realtors champion the value of home staging, in which you remove clutter and personal items, and organize the furniture in a way that highlights the home's best features. Staging your home helps sell the house quickly, and for top dollar.

In today's real estate market, potential homebuyers need to move fast in order to get the house they want. That means you have to be ready to open your doors and show off your home in a moment's notice.

So before that Realtor comes knocking, run through this list of ways to make your home look spiffy in a jiffy.

Time to tidy up

Life happens, and keeping everything folded, stacked and put away all the time is near impossible. But when homebuyers are headed your way, it's time to kick it into high gear.

Keep a basket handy so you can toss toys into it in a pinch. Stack the magazines and newspapers in a neat pile, fold the throw blankets and fluff the pillows. Line up the shoes in the mudroom and hang coats in the closet.

Let in the light

No one wants to live in a cave, and a dark, dreary interior is often an instant turnoff.

Open the curtains and turn on all the lights—yes, even in the daytime—to make the house as bright as possible.

Keep it closed

First impressions mean a lot. Take a minute to make sure all the toilet lids and closet doors are shut.

Yes, the people walking through your house will want to peek in the closets, but let them be the one to open and close the doors. You don't want the closets' contents exposed at the first glance in a room.

Attack the kitchen

There's no time for a full scrub-down, so do what you can in the time that you have: put dishes in the dishwasher; wipe off the table and countertops; toss any so-so looking food you normally keep out.

If the appliances are covered in fingerprints, buff those away ASAP. And if there's time leftover to sweep, by all means do so.

Consider the smell

Sometimes homeowners are oblivious to the way their house smells, which is normal because you get accustomed to your environment and may not realize there are stinky spots.

To be on the safe side, take out the kitchen trash and empty the kitty litter. If you have pet food that's been sitting out for a bit, move it outside until the showing is done.

Living with a funky-smelling teen? Don't be afraid to bust out the air freshener and give his or her room a quick spray. If all else fails, and it's a nice day, open a window or two for some fresh air.

MCT
Keeping your house clean and tidy helps when potential homebuyers want to stop by with little forewarning.

Life & Style

Judge: Accusers can see file from earlier Cosby case

By DENISE LAVOIE
AP LEGAL AFFAIRS WRITER

A federal judge in Philadelphia ruled Monday that attorneys for seven women suing Bill Cosby in Massachusetts for defamation can see much of the case file of a lawyer for the accuser in a 2005 sexual assault lawsuit against the comedian.

Judge Anita Brody denied a request from Cosby to block a subpoena seeking the file of former Temple University employee Andrea Constand's lawyer, Dolores Troiani.

Constand reached a confidential settlement with Cosby in the civil case. Late last year, Pennsylvania prosecutors charged Cosby criminally in the alleged assault on Constand. Cosby has pleaded not guilty.

Brody ruled the confidential agreement between Cosby and Constand "cannot block the disclosure of those materials to third parties" in a separate lawsuit.

"Even if Plaintiffs were required to produce a compelling justification for disclosure, one readily exists. The public reaps no benefit by allowing settlement agreements to suppress evidence," the judge wrote in her ruling.

The judge said she is not ruling on whether a jury in the Massachusetts defamation case will get to see the material, only on whether the lawyer for the women in the defamation suit can have access to it.

The seven women suing Cosby for defamation allege that he tainted their reputations by allowing his representatives to brand them as liars after they went public with claims that he sexually assaulted them decades ago.

Joseph Cammarata, a lawyer for the women, sought the Constand file to try to obtain evidence to bolster the women's claims.

"We look forward to the opportunity to obtain Mrs. Troiani's file materials. We expect that they'll be a treasure trove of significant information," Cammarata said Monday.

Cosby has countersued the women, alleging they have damaged his "honorable legacy and reputation" by falsely accusing him of sexual misconduct. A spokesman for Cosby's lawyers declined to comment.

The women named in the defamation suit are among about 50 who have come forward to claim that Cosby sexually abused them decades ago. He has denied the allegations.

Brody said the women's lawyer could have access to materials in the case file pertaining to the seven women and other women who have accused Cosby of sexual misconduct. The judge granted Cosby's motion to block access to "any other subject matter" in the file.

Brody has jurisdiction to rule on the subpoena issued in the Massachusetts defamation case because Cosby filed his motion to block the subpoena in Philadelphia, where Troiani is based.

AP
In this Feb. 3, 2016 file photo, actor and comedian Bill Cosby arrives for a court appearance in Norristown, Pa.

Box Office Top 20: 'Allegiant' falters, 'Miracles' ascends

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"The Divergent Series" stumbled this weekend as the third movie in the four-picture series, "Allegiant," opened to only $29 million—a far cry from the previous two films that both debuted in the same time frame to over $50 million.

"Allegiant" took second place to Disney's "Zootopia," which held on to the top spot in its third weekend with $37.2 million, pushing its domestic total past the $200 million mark.

Sony's faith-based "Miracles From Heaven" debuted in third place with a robust $14.8 million as well. The film starring Jennifer Garner cost only $13 million to produce and has made $18.4 million since its Wednesday opening.

The top 20 movies at U.S. and Canadian theaters Friday through Sunday, followed by distribution studio, gross, number of theater locations, average receipts per location, total gross and number of weeks in release, as compiled Monday by comScore:

AP
This image released by Sony Pictures shows Eugenio Derbez, left, and Jennifer Garner in a scene from Columbia Pictures', "Miracles from Heaven."

1. "Zootopia," Disney, $37,164,158, 3,959 locations, $9,387 average, $200,929,655, 3 weeks.
2. "The Divergent Series: Allegiant," Lionsgate, $29,027,348, 3,740 locations, $7,761 average, $29,027,348, 1 week.
3. "Miracles From Heaven," Sony, $14,812,393, 3,047 locations, $4,861 average, $18,369,446, 1 week.
4. "10 Cloverfield Lane," Paramount, $12,506,539, 3,427 locations, $3,649 average, $45,183,178, 2 weeks.
5. "Deadpool," 20th Century Fox, $8,011,984, 2,924 locations, $2,740 average, $340,953,367, 6 weeks.
6. "London Has Fallen," Focus Features, $6,848,377, 3,011 locations, $2,274 average, $50,044,197, 3 weeks.
7. "Whiskey Tango Foxtrot," Paramount, $2,801,718, 2,079 locations, $1,348 average, $19,272,558, 3 weeks.
8. "The Perfect Match," Lionsgate $1,974,056, 925 locations, $2,134 average, $7,380,235, 2 weeks.
9. "The Brothers Grimsby," Sony, $1,420,281, 2,235 locations, $635 average, $5,932,951, 2 weeks.
10. "The Revenant," 20th Century Fox, $1,207,791, 935 locations, $1,292 average, $181,144,329, 13 weeks.
11. "Risen," Sony, $1,145,157, 1,205 locations, $950 average, $34,471,827, 5 weeks.
12. "Gods Of Egypt," Lionsgate, $1,125,176, 1,075 locations, $1,047 average, $29,507,952, 4 weeks.
13. "The Young Messiah," Focus Features, $1,089,234, 1,769 locations, $616 average, $5,401,589, 2 weeks.
14. "Hello, My Name Is Doris," Roadside Attractions, $998,121, 128 locations, $7,798 average, $1,115,788, 2 weeks.
15. "Kapoor & Sons—Since 1921," Fox International Productions, $986,417, 143 locations, $6,898 average, $986,417, 1 week.
16. "Kung Fu Panda 3," 20th Century Fox, $971,416, 719 locations, $1,351 average, $138,384,931, 8 weeks.
17. "Star Wars: The Force Awakens," Disney, $966,071, 568 locations, $1,701 average, $932,324,258, 14 weeks.
18. "Anomalisa," Paramount, $758,136, 573 locations, $1,323 average, $3,442,820, 12 weeks.
19. "Eddie The Eagle," 20th Century Fox, $602,325, 682 locations, $883 average, $14,728,827, 4 weeks.
20. Spotlight," Open Road, $423,465, 443 locations, $956 average, $44,000,003, 20 weeks.

APNEWSBREAK:

Elon Musk's wife files to divorce billionaire

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Billionaire Elon Musk and actress Talulah Riley are making another attempt to end their second marriage.

Riley filed to divorce Musk on Monday in Los Angeles Superior Court. Musk filed for divorce on New Year's Eve in 2014 but withdrew the petition seven months later.

The divorce is amicable, and the pair agreed that Riley would file the petition to end their latest marriage after roughly 2Ω years. According to the statement, the Musk and Riley have been living separately for the past six months and plan to remain friends.

Riley's filing cites irreconcilable differences and makes no mention of a prenuptial agreement. She is seeking spousal support from Musk.

Musk co-founded Paypal and has gone on to help start the electric car company Tesla Motors and the private space firm SpaceX. He is also a champion of building a hyperloop that would transport people and cargo at the speed of sound. Riley appeared in "Pride & Prejudice" and "Inception" and wrote and directed her first feature film, "Scottish Mussel," in 2014.

The pair first married in 2010 and divorced in 2012. They re-married 18 months later.

Riley sat in the front row at September's unveiling of the Tesla's Model X sport utility vehicle. Musk is scheduled to unveil the newest version of Tesla's electric car, the lower-cost Model 3, at an event later this month.

Musk and Riley do not have any children together, although he has five sons from a previous marriage.

AP
In this March 2, 2014 file photo, Talulah Riley, left, and Elon Musk attend the 2014 Vanity Fair Oscar Party, in West Hollywood, Calif.

Dolly Parton, Katy Perry to duet at ACM Awards

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Country icon Dolly Parton and pop star Katy Perry will sing together at next month's Academy of Country Music Awards, where Parton will receive a special award for her recent television movie about her childhood.

Parton will receive the Tex Ritter Award on April 3 in Las Vegas for last year's NBC movie "Dolly Parton's Coat of Many Colors." The honor is given to a movie receiving major exposure featuring country music and previous recipients include "O Brother, Where Art Thou," ''Walk the Line" and "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas," which Parton starred in with Burt Reynolds in 1982.

The 51st annual ACM Awards will air live on CBS from the MGM Grand Garden Arena. Other performers include Luke Bryan, Carrie Underwood, Kenny Chesney and Chris Stapleton.

AP

In this Aug. 13, 2015 file photo, Dolly Parton arrives at the NBCUniversal Summer TCA Tour in Beverly Hills, Calif.

'Top Chef' winner accused of assaulting girlfriend in Austin

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—The 2012 winner of the Bravo TV show "Top Chef" has been charged with assaulting his girlfriend in Texas.

Austin police say Paul Qui (kee) was arrested Saturday morning on misdemeanor charges of unlawful restraint and of assault causing injury-family violence.

According to an arrest affidavit, Qui's girlfriend says he prevented her from leaving an apartment with her child by pushing her and throwing her against walls, doors and furniture. Qui told police he "only was grabbing and holding her."

The affidavit says the apartment was in disarray with broken furniture and glass.

Qui posted bond and was released later Saturday.

A message left for comment with the chef's restaurant in Austin, also called Qui, was not immediately returned Monday.

AP

In this Aug. 13, 2015 file photo, Dolly Parton arrives at the NBCUniversal Summer TCA Tour in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Prince Harry spends night in a Nepali village home

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP)—Britain's Prince Harry stayed at the village home of a former Nepalese Gurkha soldier who had served in the British army Monday as the prince continues his tour of the Himalayan nation.

The prince flew to the Leurani village, northwest of the capital Kathmandu, Monday where he spend time with the villagers dancing and later feasting with the family of Mangali Tamang, 86-year-old widow of a former soldier.

Villagers lined up the trail to the village offering flowers and cream-colored scarf which is offered to special guests. He stopped to visit two families who are building their homes after it was destroyed in last year's earthquake.

Press Association said Tamang was overjoyed to have her guest and, following Nepalese custom, referred to the royal as "king": "I'm very happy. I cried 'when I die I can say I talked to the king of a foreign land'."

"I could do nothing, put a garland of flowers around him and then I blessed him," Tamang was quoted as saying. "I blessed him so that he may live to be 100 years and all his wishes become fulfilled, and where he goes success will follow him."

Nepal abolished centuries-old monarchy in 2008 and Harry is the first British royal to visit Nepal since then.

Heavy rainfall with hailstorm did not dampen the celebration of the villagers.

Harry has close relations with the Gurkhas, Nepalese men who have served and fought nearly every war for the British army for two-centuries. Harry even served with a Gurkha battalion in Afghanistan.

Earlier on Monday, he flew to Bardia national park home to rhinos and tigers where he talked about conservation.

He spent hours discussing the local conservation officials and villagers about the tigers and even rode on a boat.

Harry is on a five-day trip to Nepal where he already met the president, prime minister, attended an official function to mark 200 years of friendship between Nepal and Britain.

AP

Britain's Prince Harry, second left, sits inside a temporary shelter as he visits the camp for displaced families, in Bhaktapur, Nepal, Sunday, March 20, 2016.

The highlight of his trip was visiting the earthquake damaged areas and highlighting reconstruction efforts.

He visited with families living in tents at a camp in Nepal for people made homeless by last April's devastating earthquake, toured old palaces and temples that were damaged.

The earthquake killed nearly 9,000 people and destroying about 1 million homes. There has been little to help the victims even a year after the earthquake.

TNT's Sager says leukemia no longer in remission

NEW YORK (AP)—Turner Sports reporter Craig Sager says in an interview with HBO that his leukemia is no longer in remission.

Sager missed 11 months while undergoing treatment and a bone marrow transplant from his son before returning to his position on the sideline during TNT's NBA coverage in March 2015. But he says in a "Real Sports" interview to debut Tuesday that he learned last month that the cancer was no longer in remission.

The 64-year-old Sager says he is in "unchartered waters" and must keep his strength up. He adds he has already undergone two stem cell transplants and it's very rare that someone would have a third, so he has to keep his strength up.

Perhaps best known for his outlandish outfits, Sager is not scheduled to work TNT's doubleheader Tuesday night.

Mom's body piercings are becoming targets of ridicule

DEAR ABBY: My sister and I have no interest in body piercing (except our ears), but we have seen it on friends and are not impressed. However, our 44-year-old mom got her nipples pierced and has started wearing jewelry there!

Our parents are divorced and she's not in a relationship right now, so it's not to impress a man. She says she did it to feel good about herself, which makes no sense to us. She takes off her top to show her female friends when they come over, and we can see them literally roll their eyes, but she doesn't seem to notice.

She has now started showing off her piercings to OUR friends. I'm talking about girlfriends, but even so, we find this beyond embarrassing. They're polite to her face but laugh behind her back, and word about it has spread, which we find humiliating. I suppose we should be thankful that at least she hasn't pierced her most personal place to show off to our friends like we've seen some girls do.

We think some kind of midlife crisis or hormonal imbalance is causing her to act this way, but we wish she'd find a better outlet. If she wants to make a fool of herself in front of her friends, that's one thing. But we don't think she has the right to embarrass us in front of our friends! What can we do?

EMBARRASSED IN THE WEST

DEAR EMBARRASSED: I agree that what your mother has been doing is inappropriate. That she has done it among her friends is one thing, but for her to disrobe to show your friends her nipple piercings is wrong. She may do this because she wants to prove to them (or herself) that she's still young and "with-it." If that's the case, it's pathetic.

If you haven't told her that when she flashes your friends it's embarrassing and you want her to stop, you should. If she realizes she's making herself a laughingstock, she may stop. However, if she doesn't, then you and your sister will have to accept that you can't change her, and realize that what she's doing is no reflection on the two of you.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am a "catfisher." I use a fake Facebook account with pictures of an attractive woman to attract men. I specifically target married or committed men. I talk to and flirt with them online to see how far they'll go. They often ask me for more pictures and invite me to meet somewhere for sex. I never give real information or meet any of them.

My question is, should I let the women these men are involved with know that their men are unfaithful or keep it to myself?

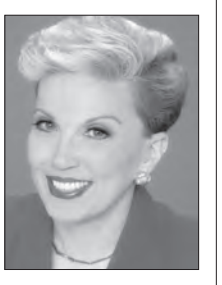
KARMA IN GEORGIA

DEAR KARMA: How can you be concerned for the wives and girlfriends when YOU are the person providing the temptation? I think you would be better served if you worked on your own problem before you try to resolve the issues of people you have never met and never will.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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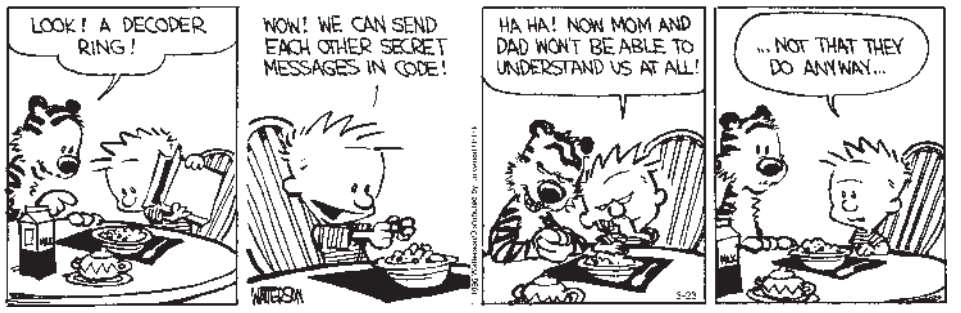
For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


LOOK! A DECODER RING!
NOW! WE CAN SEND EACH OTHER SECRET MESSAGES IN CODE!
HA HA! NOW MOM AND DAD WON'T BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND US AT ALL!
...NOT THAT THEY DO ANYWAY...

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

OKAY. I'M PRETTY SURE KATY'S JUST IMAGINING THIS GHOST.
YOU THINK?
SHE JUST HAS A REALLY ACTIVE IMAGINATION, YOU KNOW?
LIKE...IF SHE SAW THAT ORANGE OUT OF THE BOWL, SHE'D THINK A GHOST DID IT.
BUT SERIOUSLY, DID YOU MOVE THE ORANGE?
YOU MEAN THE SCARY GHOST ORANGE?

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

DOING TAXES, HUH? DOGS DON'T HAVE TO DO TAXES.
I KNOW.
WE ALSO DON'T HAVE TO GO TO WORK OR WEAR PANTS.
YEAH, RUB IT IN.
OH, AND WE CAN DRINK OUT OF THE TOILET BOWL!
YOU NEVER KNOW HOW TO STOP WHEN YOU'RE AHEAD.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

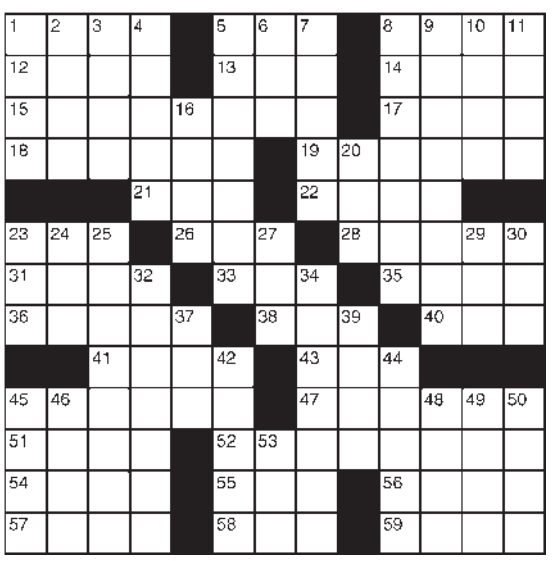
ACROSS
1 Hebrew month
5 Massachusetts cape
8 Mosque VIP
12 Playboy
13 Menagerie
14 Snack in a shell
15 Fairway vehicle
17 Canyon comeback
18 Trial
19 Mists
21 Reuben bread
22 The Tentmaker
23 Altar affirmative
26 Express
28 Mall unit
31 Pleasing
33 Dine
35 Billions of years
36 Eucalyptus eater
38 Started
40 Snooze
41 "Monopoly" payment
43 Nanki— — "Mikado" role)
45 "Twelfth Night" countess
47 Sikh headwear
51 — colada
52 Capone epithet
54 Part of Q.E.D.
55 Up to, briefly
56 Wry Bombeck
57 Job for Holmes
58 Talk, talk, talk
59 Baltic Sea feeder

DOWN
1 Ship of myth
2 Portal
3 Bygone, to Burns
4 Allude (to)
5 Flowering shrubs
6 Neither mate
7 "Untrue!"
8 State repeatedly
9 Almond cookie
10 Needing liniment
11 Cattle calls?
16 Coral isles
20 Afternoons, for short
23 Squid squirt
24 God, to Galileo
25 Simple wind instruments
27 Actor Brynner
29 Genetic letters
30 Kreskin's claim
32 Hoist
34 Encouraging words
37 Blackbird
39 Gloomy
42 Palatable
44 Gluck's "— ed Euridice"
45 Oil cartel
46 Old Italian money
48 Poet
49 Wile E.'s supplier
50 Close
53 Spy-novel org.

Solution time: 23 mins.

H	E	M	P		S	C	I		P	O	S	H
I	S	F	E		W	A	R		A	I	P	O
P	A	R	A	D	I	S	E		R	E	A	R
S	U	E		E	L	K		A	C	O	R	N
			P	A	L		U	G	H			
P	E	C	A	N		B	R	A	M	B	L	E
O	M	A	R		F	O	N		F	A	S	Y
P	O	R	T	I	C	O		U	N	D	U	E
			H	E	O		I	N	I			
H	A	R	E	M		T	A	U		A	N	O
E	W	A	N		P	A	R	M	E	S	A	N
A	R	G	O		A	M	O		S	I	L	O
R	Y	A	N		M	E	T		T	S	A	R

Yesterday's answer 3-23



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Michelle Monaghan, 40; Keri Russell, 40; Catherine Keener, 57; Chaka Khan, 63.

Happy Birthday: A methodical approach and solid preparation will help guide you down the right path. Make calculated decisions that will allow you to alter your future professionally, financially or physically. Not everything will run smoothly, so be ready to counter any opposition you meet along the way. Set your goals and follow through. Personal alterations are best dealt with frugally. Your numbers are 3, 10,24, 31, 35, 43, 47.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Refuse to let emotions overrule your common sense. Back away from unfair or stressful situations. An intent effort to take care of your responsibilities and promises should come first. An opportunity will come from an unexpected source. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Do whatever it takes to take care of your responsibilities. Learn as you go, and make a point to thank those who have helped. Romance is in the stars, and planning something special for someone you love should be a priority. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You are advised to plan your actions carefully. Don't be too willing to help people who don't want to return the favor. Draw the line if someone is pushy or trying to entice you to do something that isn't healthy. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Don't let what others do stand in your way. You've got plenty to offer, and by heading in your own direction, you will draw interest and show initiative. Positive changes at home will improve your personal life. ✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Jump at any chance to try something new or to take a short trip to a place you've never been before. Put more energy into activities that are challenging, and share your feelings with someone you love. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Partnerships are promising, but before you jump into something, do your research and make sure you aren't required to do the brunt of the work. The best opportunity will come from someone who is willing to contribute as much as you. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't let a situation at home cost you at work. Focus on being productive and it will take your mind off your worries. You need time to evaluate your next move. Don't do anything until you feel sure. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Offer a different point of view or do things your own way. Embrace challenges and an opportunity to apply your experience will develop. Romance will bring you closer to someone you want to share your time and space with. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): The changes you make at home will bring you greater freedom. Whether you cut corners by running your place more efficiently or you sell off things you don't need, you will come out ahead and succeed in reducing your stress. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): A lifestyle change will help you flourish in ways you never thought possible. Revisit old ideas and dreams, and you'll find a way to move forward with plans you never thought would come into play. Commit to doing things your way. ✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Money, health and legal concerns should be your top priority. You can bring about strategic changes to the way you work and play that will increase your stamina, health and general well-being. Make an effort and everything will fall into place. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): It's up to you to call the shots. If you let someone interfere, you will only have yourself to blame. Be upfront about what you will do for others and don't let anyone make you feel guilty for pursuing your goals. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are strong-minded, candid and forceful. You are aggressive and possessive.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		4	2	7	8	6		
	3						8	
8				3				1
7				4				8
4	9			1	5	2		7
3								6
2								5
	4			6			1	
		9	7	5	4	3		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/23

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	7	3	2	8	4	1	9	6
6	1	9	5	7	3	2	4	8
8	4	2	6	1	9	3	7	5
7	5	4	3	2	8	6	1	9
3	6	8	9	4	1	5	2	7
9	2	1	7	6	5	4	8	3
2	9	7	4	3	6	8	5	1
4	8	6	1	5	7	9	3	2
1	3	5	8	9	2	7	6	4

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/23

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

CONFIRMATION SPONSOR Solution: 5 letters

Y	Y	W	R	F	T	S	I	R	A	H	C	U	E	T
W	T	T	O	I	H	H	A	N	D	S	S	A	M	R
T	I	I	S	R	G	E	V	O	L	F	T	G	A	O
S	L	T	N	E	G	H	V	O	R	I	N	O	N	P
N	I	U	N	I	I	E	T	U	R	E	O	D	C	P
O	B	B	D	E	R	R	I	I	S	E	I	H	O	U
I	I	A	L	A	S	T	P	E	D	S	O	Y	M	S
T	S	P	T	I	S	S	C	I	C	S	R	E	M	A
A	N	T	E	B	N	O	U	U	E	H	E	N	I	C
C	O	I	A	L	I	G	S	N	Ⓡ	T	N	R	T	R
I	P	S	C	D	O	S	S	D	Ⓘ	I	N	U	M	A
L	S	M	H	R	V	R	H	N	Ⓣ	A	I	O	E	M
P	E	C	E	T	F	I	G	O	Ⓔ	F	D	J	N	E
P	R	P	R	A	Y	S	C	B	P	L	E	H	T	N
A	C	T	I	V	I	T	I	E	S	T	S	U	R	T

©2016 Universal Uclick www.wonderword.com Download the Wonderword Game App! 3/23

Activities, Adult, Advice, Application, Archdiocese, Baptism, Bishop, Bond, Chosen, Commitment, Dinner, Discuss, Dove, Eucharist, Faith, Fire, Fruits, Gift, God, Grow, Guide, Hands, Help, Journey, Love, Mass, Meetings, Name, Pray, Priest, Responsibility, Right, Rite, Role, Sacrament, Siblings, Spirit, Support, Teacher, Trinity, Trust, Witness

Yesterday's Answer: Winds

Treasury 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 or **21** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (Contain 130 puzzles.)

CLASSIFIED ADS

EMPLOYMENT

Opening for Controller with Bridge Capital, LLC in Garapan, Saipan, CNMI. Minimum Requirements: Bachelor's Degree in Accounting or Finance (may be foreign equivalent) and 5 yrs. experience as Controller, Accountant and/or Auditor, or any suitable combination of education, training or experience. Provides Fiscal and Business Management advice and consultancy at the corporate level. Send CV to PMB 29, Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950; email to jordan.sundell@bccnmi.com or fax to 670-322-2323. Verification of qualifications required.

---

1 General Manager (Accounting): $1,000-1,800/mo. 5 years of managerial experience required. Must have majored in accounting. 10 years of accounting experience required. Korean writing and speaking fluency required. Email resume to hps@hanmisaipan.com.

WHATZIT Solution: Left, right and center

R.E.A.L. Corporation is looking for
(8) Construction Worker
(5) Mason
(5) Carpenter
Interested applicants may e-mail remypamintuan@gmail.com for more information.
We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

WANTED

Cement Supervisor
Salary: $7.73 per hour
Must have cement handling equipment experience

Apply in person at
Hanson Micronesia Cement Inc., Puerto Rico

Cement Laborer
Cement handling equipment experience preferred.
Will train motivated individuals
Wages based on experience

Apply in person at
Hanson Micronesia Cement Inc.
Tel: 670 322-3333

JOB VACANCY ANNOUCEMENT

RAND CONSTRUCTION
is in need of the following:

- (4) **Mason**
- (3) **Carpenter**
- (4) **Housekeeping**

At least 2 years work experience.

If interested, email:
rand.email286@gmail.com
or submit resume to:
P.O. Box 501263,
Saipan, MP 96950

Job Vacancy Announcement

(1) Building Maintenance Repairer
5 years minimum work experience required in building maintenance including finishing carpentry, masonry, plumbing installation, tile laying, wood staining and varnishing, plastering, and other maintenance duties as assigned. Knowledgeable in basic building design, construction, and repair. Must have valid CNMI driver's license and transportation. Pay is minimum wage.

Interested applicants may contact 287-9684 or send resume, police clearance, and references to RJR Co. at rjrco@yahoo.com

EMPLOYMENT

1 Cook (Korean cuisine): $6.05/hr. At least 2 years professional cooking experience in Korean cuisine required. Email resume to kl@hanmisaipan.com.

---

2 Cook (Korean cuisine): $6.05/hr. At least 2 years of professional cooking experience in Korean cuisine required. Email resume to wing@hanmisaipan.com.

---

1 Butcher: $6.05/hr. High school diploma and at least 3 years experience required. Email resume to dolim@hanmisaipan.com.

WANTED IMMEDIATELY

Receptionist/ Front Desk Clerk

With minimum 2 years experience
Salary will commensurate with applicant's knowledge and experience

---

Interested applicants may pick up an application form at H.S Lee Construction, Co. Inc. office, from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM; located at the second floor of Highway Express Auto Shop Building in Middle Road.

WANTED IMMEDIATELY

All Around Auto Mechanic

- With minimum 2 years of experience
- Salary will commensurate for applicant's knowledge and experience

---

Interested applicants may pick up an application form from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the Ground floor building of D&W Saipan Inc. dba Highway Express Auto Shop in Middle Road.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT for MISA ENTERPRISES,INC.

General Maintenance (3): Duties may involve skills in electrical, plumbing, carpentry, masonry, painting, landscape or maintain grounds of property using hand or power tools or equipment. Can typically perform variety of task such as sod laying, mowing, trimming, planting, watering, fertilizing, digging, raking and installing , repairing buildings, floors or stairs.

Additional Requirements: Must have a valid CNMI driver's license and flexible in work hours. All applicants must be of good health and good moral character must be able to provide current police clearance, with reliable transportation and must agree to drug test.

Applicants of position listed above are required to have a minimum of 2-3 years of experience.

We are an equal opportunity employer. Qualified applicants will be considered.

Applications can be picked up at Kinpachi Restaurant MISA Bldg.1 in Coral Tree Avenue, Garapan. Please no phone calls.

Marianas Medical Center

is seeking for U.S. qualified workers for the following position:

Accountant
Bachelor's degree in Accounting with at least three (3) years of accounting experience is required. Proficiency in the use of QuickBooks accounting software and Microsoft Office applications. Must have excellent verbal and written communication skills, analytical and problem solving abilities, and the ability to multi-task in a fast paced environment. Experience working in a medical field setting is preferred.

Position closes at 5:00pm on Friday, April 8, 2016.
Applications are available at the Marianas Medical Center. Applications should include a resume and evidence of education degree(s) and professional licenses claimed. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Marianas Medical Center is an equal opportunity employer.

Job Vacancy Announcement

Equipment Parts Person

Wage Range: $6.05 to $7.05 per hour depending on qualifications and experience, 2 years minimum in equipment parts position preferred.

Must be familiar with heavy equipment such as dump trucks, concrete mixer trucks, loaders, excavators, graders, etc. There are also light duty trucks and vehicles in the fleet. Receive parts, stock shelves, inventory parts, provide order information to parts manager based on minimum inventory levels for parts, keep stockrooms and inventories organized. May help search catalogs for stock numbers and catalog numbers of parts. Maintain inventory and help track down rare parts for older machines and equipment. Prepare service kits for maintenance based on hour or mileage maintenance schedules.

Send Resume: David L. Bush, General Manager, Hawaiian Rock Products,
PMB 139, PPP P.O. Box 10000, Saipan, MP 96950; by facsimile (670) 288-0408;
or by e-mail to dbush@hawaiianrock.com

HAW'N ROCK PRODUCTS CORP.

WE ARE AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

CTSI Logistics is inviting qualified U.S. workers to apply for the following positions:

Sales Officer
Associate's Degree in Sales or Marketing and at least 3 years work related experience are required as well as an extensive knowledge and experience in supply chain and freight brokerage. Must have his/her own reliable transportation. Can work flexible hours. Must be able to meet monthly sales targets and have extensive contacts in various industries. Proficiency in freight forwarding, shipping and household goods operations are a must. Must be familiar with freight forwarding software.

A pre-employment drug testing will be required. Salaries will be commensurate with qualification and experience. For applications to be considered, they should submit resume / application to CTSI Logistics, Lower Base not later than April 01, 2016.

We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.
Women, minorities and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.

SECTION 8 VOUCHER ACCEPTED

NEW 2, 3, and 4 bedroom energy efficient apartments in Saipan. Lower utility costs up to 70% through solar panels and solar hot water.

NOW LEASING
Starting @ $599/mo.

OPEN HOUSE
MONDAY - FRIDAY • 9AM - 4PM
For pictures, amenities, and application information visit our website
www.ironwoodhousing.com
or call 670-233-4348. Applications are being accepted Monday - Friday, 8:30a.m. to 5:00p.m. and on Saturday, 9:00a.m. to 12:00p.m., at Ironwood Community Center on Middle Road, Gualo Rai.

Job Vacancy Announcement

(2) Cooks
- Knowledgeable in Chinese Cuisine
- Ability to speak Chinese language is a plus
- Must have a minimum of 2 years work related experience.

Interested applicants may call at (670) 989-4676
Feng Shun Corp. dba Face to Face Restaurant

Backhoe for Rent
For inquiries, please call **285-0478**
5G CORPORATION
• Security Services • Heavy Equipment Rental
• General Help Supply Services • Auto & Heavy Equipment Repair Shop

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
CMI General Construction
70 – Construction Workers
Email resume to cmi.gencon@gmail.com

Warehouse for RENT
REM LOWERBASE
Warehouse #3 - Size: 6,000sq/ft
$0.65 per sq/ft. Negotiable
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL 235-6527/28 or 285-1317

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 5-day run in both print and online editions, for as low as $30 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$15	$30
• 5-Liner	$24	$45

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads
Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads
Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

and left

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www.facebook.com/dingbatsgames

Find today's solution in classified section

LeBron's triple-double leads Cavs to division title

CLEVELAND (AP)—LeBron James gladly talked about another triple-double, another division championship and a resounding win—No. 50 this season for the Cavaliers.

His social media habits, though, were off limits.

James scored 33 points and recorded his 41st career triple-double night as Cleveland clinched its second straight Central Division title with a 124-91 victory over the Denver Nuggets on Monday night.

James added 11 rebounds and 11 assists before checking out to a thunderous ovation from another sellout crowd at Quicken Loans Arena. He scored 17 in the first quarter, helping the Cavs build a 19-point lead following an embarrassing loss on Saturday night in Miami.

"It was in the back of our minds, for sure," James said of the 122-101 drubbing against his former team. "You just can't erase a performance like that. No matter if it was our fifth game in seven nights, we just didn't bring it the way we should and tonight we responded very well."

But as James was piling up the statistics, the Internet was abuzz with reports that he had apparently unfollowed the Cavs' Twitter account earlier in the day. It was the latest off-the-court chatter surrounding James, who has posted mysterious messages in the past -- and declined to speak with the media following the team's morning shootaround.

Asked if it was true he dropped (at)Cavs, James said, "Next question."

He was then asked if he and his teammates can carry this performance over.

"My mind," he said, shaking his head. "I'm done."

J.R. Smith added 15 points and Channing Frye 14 for Cleveland, which played without starter Kevin Love (illness).

Will Barton scored 27 for the Nuggets, who concluded a 1-4 road trip. Denver's Kenneth Faried missed his third straight game with a sore lower back.

AP

From left to right, Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James passes around Denver Nuggets' JaKarr Sampson and Jusuf Nurkic, from Bosnia, in the first half of an NBA basketball game Monday, March 21, 2016, in Cleveland.

Hornets 91, Spurs 88

In Charlotte, Jeremy Lin scored 15 of his 29 points in the fourth quarter, and Charlotte overcame a 23-point deficit to snap San Antonio's six-game winning streak.

Lin was 11 of 18 from the field and hit all four 3-point attempts, including three in the fourth quarter.

Courtney Lee had 17 points, Nicolas Batum added 15, and Cody Zeller grabbed 14 rebounds for the Hornets, who bounced back from a disappointing loss to the Denver Nuggets on Saturday night.

Tony Parker had 19 points for the Spurs, while LaMarcus Aldridge added 18 points and 12 rebounds. Tim Duncan had 16 points and 10 rebounds.

Warriors 109, Timberwolves 104

In Minneapolis, Draymond Green had 24 points, nine rebounds and six assists to help Golden State narrowly avoid its first two-game skid in nearly a year with a victory over Minnesota.

Klay Thompson scored 17 points and hit all five of his 3-pointers, and the Warriors (63-7) overcame a second straight poor shooting night from Stephen Curry. The reigning MVP missed 11 of his 17 shots, including seven of his nine 3-pointers, but still had 19 points, 11 assists and seven rebounds.

Wizards 112, Hawks 102

In Atlanta, John Wall scored 27 points and dished out 14 assists, Bradley Beal chipped in with 25 points and Washington extended its winning streak to a season-high five games.

The Hawks came into the game have won five straight and eight of their past nine, pushing to a season-high 12 games above .500. But the Wizards bolstered their playoff hopes with a dazzling offensive display, shooting 51 percent from the field and knocking down 13-of-25 from 3-point range.

Every starter scored in double figures. Otto Porter had 16 points and 10 rebounds.

Bulls 109, Kings 102

In Chicago, Derrick Rose and Taj Gibson had 18 points each, Doug McDermott added 16 and Pau Gasol had 14 points and 14 rebounds to lead the Chicago Bulls to a 109-102 comeback victory over the Sacramento Kings on Monday night.

Rose was 9 for 15 from the field and hit a couple of 15-foot jumpers during Chicago's decisive 10-0 run in the fourth quarter to rally from a five-point deficit.

Gasol recorded his 39th double-double of the season in his first game back after missing four games with a swollen right knee.

Pacers 91, Sixers 75

In Indianapolis, Paul George scored 15 points and Monta Ellis added 13 to help Indiana pull away from Philadelphia.

Indiana snapped a two-game losing streak and won for just the second time in five games as it tries to take advantage of a favorable schedule to make a late-season playoff push.

Hollis Thompson and Isaiah Canaan each scored 15 for the 76ers, who have lost six straight and 19 of their last 20.

This one was never really close..

Celtics 107, Magic 96

In Boston, Isaiah Thomas had 28 points and seven assists and Boston held on to beat Orlando.

Avery Bradley had 22 points and nine rebounds and Kelly Olynyk had 22 points in his fourth game back from a right shoulder sprain to help the Celtics even the season series with the Magic at two games each.

Boston led by 14 early in the fourth quarter and ended the game on a 9-2 run after having its lead cut to four. It was the Celtics' first home victory since their 14-game home winning streak was snapped on March 11.

Victor Oladipo led Orlando with 25 points and eight rebounds.

Pistons 92, Bucks 91

In Auburn Hills, Andre Drummond's tip-in with 2 seconds remaining lifted Detroit over Milwaukee.

The Pistons, who are in a tight race for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference, came out inexplicably flat and trailed by 17 points in the first half. They were down 13 in the third quarter before chipping away at Milwaukee's lead in the fourth.

Drummond was outplayed badly early on by Greg Monroe, but when Kentavious Caldwell-Pope missed from the perimeter in the final seconds, Drummond was able to tip the ball in. The Bucks weren't able to get a clean shot off after that.

Spieth gets longtime friend Thomas in Match Play group

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—Defending champion Rory McIlroy will face a player he knows very little about in the Dell Match Play.

Jordan Spieth knows one of his opponents all too well.

Spieth, the former Texas Longhorn and crowd favorite at Austin Country Club, wound up in the same group as longtime friend Justin Thomas.

Both are 22 and they have been friends since 2007, when they were selected to represent the United States in the Evian Junior Masters. Spieth beat him in a high-profile match in the NCAA Championship at Riviera in 2012, which the Longhorns won, and has gone on to two majors and reach the No. 1 world ranking.

The 64 players were broken into four groups based on this week's ranking, and one player was chosen by lottery to fill out the 16 four-man groups. The draw was held at the Paramount Theater, and Ben Crenshaw picked the names out of the bowl for Spieth's group.

"Jordan probably won't talk to me the rest of the week," Crenshaw said. "They've played a lot of golf together. Obviously, they know each other very well. They're admirers of each other."

Spieth and Thomas already have played together three times this year—the opening two rounds at Riviera, and the third round at Doral. They won't play each other at the Match Play until Friday. Also in their group are Victor Dubuisson of France and Jamie Donaldson of Wales.

McIlroy won last year at Harding Park with three close calls before beating Gary Woodland in the championship match. He is the only player among the top six in the world who has yet to win this year, and hopes this week will spark him in his final tournament before the Masters.

In his group is Smylie Kaufman, who won his first PGA Tour event in Las Vegas in just his second start as a member. McIlroy also has Kevin Na and Thorbjorn Olesen.

"Thorbjorn is a good friend of mine. The first time I played with Thorbjorn was in Egypt in 2010. We've got a little bit of history," McIlroy said.

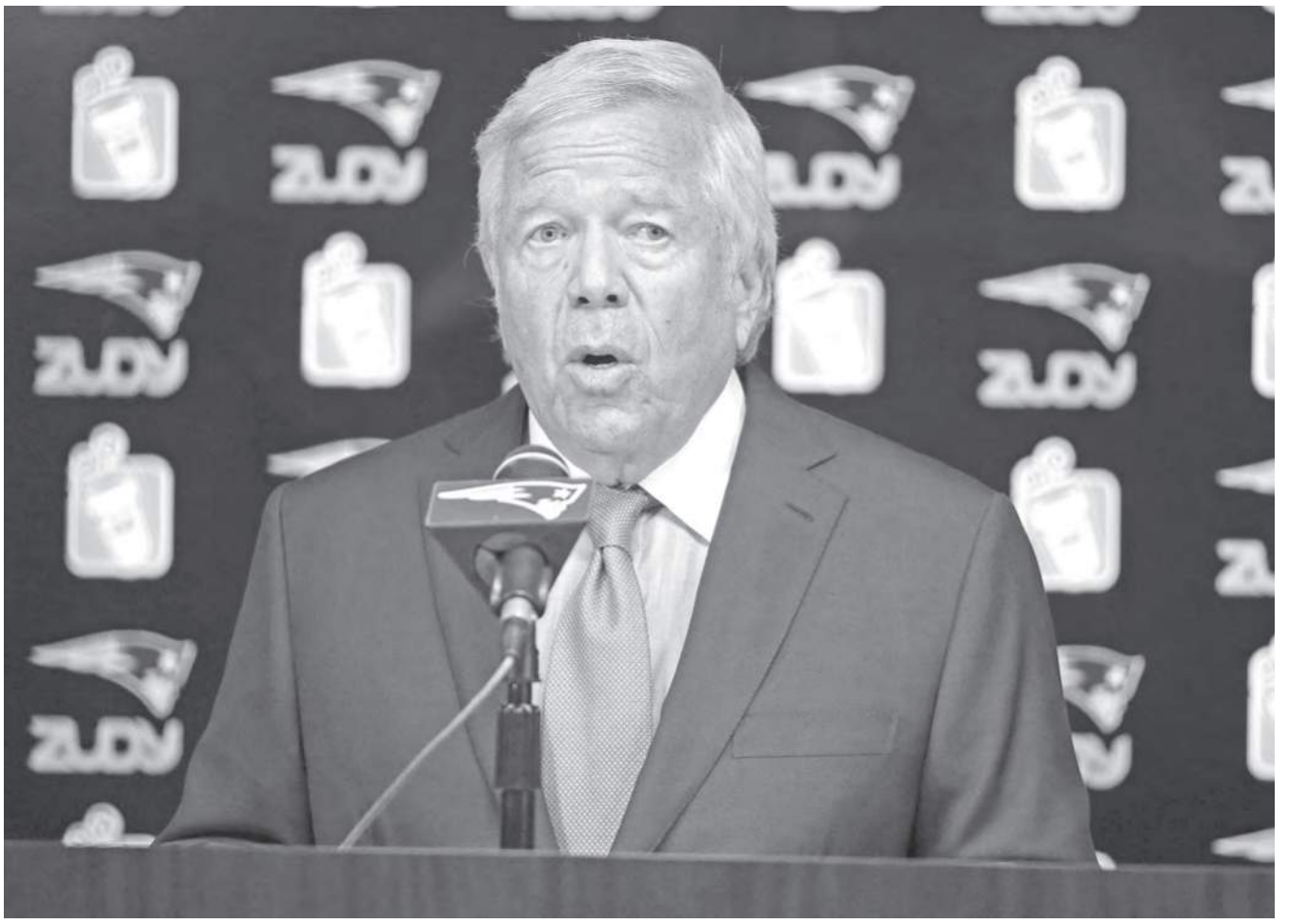
"Smylie, I really don't know that much about. I know that he got off to a great start in his PGA Tour career. As I said, no matter who you draw in this event, you know you're going to get a tough match."

The 18-hole match play switched to group last year, moving away from the single-elimination format that made this event aggravating to those who lost early, and difficult on the sponsors because top players often were gone by the weekend.

This year, however, matches during group play can end in a draw.

One player from each of the 16 groups advance to the knockout stage that starts on Saturday. If two or more players in a group are tied, they go to a sudden-death playoff.

Pats new owner seeks 'Deflategate' draft picks back



AP
In this July 29, 2015, file photo, New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft addresses a room full of reporters to make a statement condemning NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell's action upholding New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady's four game "Deflategate" suspension during an NFL football training camp media availability at the team's facility in Foxborough, Mass. Kraft has asked the NFL to reinstate the draft picks the team lost in the deflated footballs investigation stemming from the 2014 AFC title game.

BOCA RATON, Fla. (AP)—New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft has asked the NFL to reinstate the draft picks the team lost in the deflated footballs investigation stemming from the 2014 AFC title game.

Kraft said Monday at the owners' meetings that he sent a letter to Commissioner Roger Goodell more than a month ago seeking a return of the two picks -- a first-rounder this year and a fourth-rounder in 2017. He did not say if Goodell responded.

But Kraft didn't sound optimistic that the picks would be returned, or that quarterback Tom Brady's four-game suspension would be rescinded should an appeals court rule in favor of the league in the saga dubbed "Deflategate." Brady had the suspension overturned in an earlier court case before the NFL appealed.

In his letter, Kraft cited new evidence uncovered since the NFL investigation ended.

"I personally believe that when the league made their decision, they did not factor in the ideal gas law," Kraft said. "They admitted that publicly. They had a full year of being able to observe Tom Brady play with all the rules of whatever the NFL was, and make any judgments there. We have laid it out pretty straightforward. And now it's up for them to decide.

"They did their own testing; they have results, and for whatever reason, they haven't shared them with any of us. We actually requested at the beginning of the season that they test every game throughout the league, but they chose to do it their way."

The NFL randomly tested the air in footballs before games last season but hasn't released the information.

New England also was fined $1 million and Kraft said last May he would not fight that sanction in hopes of "tuning down the rhetoric."

Kraft said he does not sense any surge of support for the Patriots in the case.

"I don't think you'll see any momentum among our peers," Kraft said. "I wish they would, because they could be in a similar position."

Meanwhile, even though NFL owners won't vote on any proposals regarding what constitutes a reception in their games, competition committee co-chairman Rich McKay and officiating director Dean Blandino spent more time trying to clarify the rule and fielding questions about catching Monday than on any other subject.

There will be tweaks to the language but no changes in the catch rule. The criteria remain the same: control of the ball; two feet on the ground in bounds; and enough time to clearly become a runner.

Deviating from that, Blandino explained, would severely complicate the officials' jobs, while the aim is to simplify the calls in real time.

"The key part of the rule allows for consistency in calls on the field," Blandino said.

The rule also is a factor in player safety issues.

"It's tied to the defenseless receiver rule," Blandino said. "You don't want to shorten the time a receiver is protected from hits to the head, etc."

Blandino and McKay recognize and readily admit determining what is a catch is among the toughest calls for officials.

They cite the speed of the action—Blandino calls them "bang-bang plays"—and how TV technology has improved. High-definition replays in slow motion can make virtually every play a potential subject for controversy.

The league consulted former and current receivers, coaches, front office personnel and officials while reviewing the catch rule.

"They were unanimous that we need to continue to use video to show examples and teach," Blandino said. "Not just for the media and fans, but for the players and coaches and officials."

Blandino also said the league is "working toward" having an eighth official on the field in games beginning in 2017 who would focus on the defensive line, particularly in the run game. With the league recently having moved the umpire behind the offensive backfield, there is added concern about spotting defensive holding in the trenches.

Not surprisingly, Blandino was not enamored of proposals from some teams to expand replay and coaches challenges.

Suggestions have ranged from being allowed to challenge any call except on scores and turnovers, which already are automatically reviewed, to increasing the number of challenges from two to three.

Allowing challenges on penalty calls would lead to "rewriting the rulebook and ... create a different look of officiating."

The proposal to spot the ball at the 25-yard line instead of the 20 on touchbacks on kickoffs is something the competition committee wanted to do several years ago when the kickoff was moved to the 35-yard line.

"We felt like ... we're still getting a lot of returns from deep in the end zone," McKay said. "This gives the option to take a knee and take (the ball) to the 25."

One somewhat exotic option the owners discussed Monday was staging a regular-season game in China, perhaps as early as 2018.

A detailed analysis of how much interest there would be in such a game in the world's most populous country is under way. But few details, including which Chinese city the league will target, have been settled.

Quietly, several teams have expressed a willingness to be involved in a game in China.

This year, the NFL will stage three games in London and return to Mexico for a regular-season game in November.

The NFL had planned to play a preseason game in China once before, in 2007 in Beijing, but it was canceled.

Germany also has expressed interest in hosting an NFL regular-season game.

MLB ups prospect spending, overall percent steady

NEW YORK (AP)—Major league teams steeply increased the money spent on young players last year, when several Cuban prospects got big-money deals. Still, the overall percentage of revenue devoted to players has remained relatively stable for a decade.

Financial data released by Major League Baseball to The Associated Press showed the big leaguers' share of net revenue was between 48.5 percent and 51.7 percent each year since 2006.

Dollars spent on amateur players and minor leaguers rose by 29 percent last year—four times the increase in big league compensation. Counting signing bonuses for amateurs and minor league salaries, revenue devoted to players has ranged from 53.7 percent in 2012 to 57.5 percent last year.

"The data shows that the percentage of our revenue that has been paid to players has been fairly consistent," said Dan Halem, MLB's chief legal officer. "Obviously, it's a free market and clubs can spend however much they choose. We've seen an uptick in spending on the amateur side, and on the major league side it fluctuates slightly up and down but it has stayed within a range."

Scott Boras, the most prominent player agent, said at the general managers' meetings in November that the players' share of revenue had dropped to 43 percent. Boras is including gross revenue from Major League Baseball Advanced Media, which formed in 2000, and the MLB Network, which launched in 2009 and is two-thirds owned by MLB. The expenses of running those companies are deducted to determine their net revenue.

During his final season as baseball commissioner, Bud Selig said revenue would exceed $9 billion in 2014, but that was the gross figure.

"We believe that using net income for MLBAM and the network is appropriate for assessing the percentage of revenue that owners pay to players," Halem said. "Owners only can spend the net profits of those businesses, not gross revenues which they never receive."

MLB said net revenue rose from $7.16 billion in 2013 to $7.79 billion in 2014 to $8.15 billion last year.

Dollars devoted to big leaguers climbed from $3.59 billion in 2013 to $3.87 billion in 2014 to $4.15 million last year; the amount on amateurs and minor leaguers was $420 million annually in 2013 and `14, then jumped to $540 million last year, when several Cuban defectors and young Dominicans received large signing bonuses.

Boston agreed to pay $31.5 million alone to Yoan Moncada, a 19-year-old Cuban second baseman. Three other Cuban prospects agreed to bonuses of $8 million or more: Arizona pitcher Yoan Lopez, Los Angeles Angels shortstop Roberto Baldoquin and Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Pablo Fernandez.

The Major League Baseball Players Association has access to MLB's figures, and union head Tony Clark described the percentage devoted to players as "fairly constant."

"Two or three percentage points one way or the other is always room for improvement," he said of the fluctuations.

Boras did not want to comment on MLB's figures, but did say he thought gross revenue should be used to determine increases in teams' signing bonus pools for amateur players. The draft figures to be a key discussion matter in talks for a collective bargaining agreement to succeed the labor deal that expires Dec. 1. Under the 2012-16 agreement, the pools increase annually at the rate of the rise in total industry revenue—defined as MLB did in these figures.

"I trust in negotiations of the draft itself, and this is a union matter, that attention is paid to outside sources and expenses affecting the amount of money that teams can spend on drafted players pursuant to a calculation of net versus gross revenues," Boras said.

5 Tsunami Saipan swimmers complete Tokyo Sprint stint

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Tsunami Saipan swimmers pose for a group photo at the Tatsumi International Swimming Arena during the Tokyo Junior Sprint 2016 held in Japan early this month.

Five Tsunami Saipan swimmers recorded respectable finishes in the Tokyo Junior Sprint 2016 held early this month at the Tatsumi International Swimming Arena in Japan.

Nelson Batallones was one of them, ranking at the top half of the boys 12 years old age group' 50m freestyle after posting 31.09 seconds, which was good for No. 65 spot out of the 156 participants. In his other event—the 50m butterfly—Batallones clocked in at 34.20 seconds to place at No. 29 out of 75 swimmers.

Anthony Camacho joined the lower age group (10) and made it to the Top 20 in the 50m freestyle. His 32.63 seconds landed him at No. 17 out of 160 participants. In the 50m butterfly, he checked in at 25th out of 94 swimmers after registering 35.85 seconds.

In the boys 11 division, Juhn Tenorio was at the top half of both the 100m individual medley and 50m backstroke. In the shorter race—the 50m backstroke—Tenorio logged 36.20 seconds to rank at No. 31 out of 72 participants.

Team captain Aika Watanabe also competed in the 50m backstroke in the girls 12 division and her 37.42 seconds earned her the No. 42 spot out of 62 swimmers. In the 100m IM, she fared better, recording the 33rd best (out of 50) time after posting1:23.49.

Aika's sister, Nanaka, raced in the 100m IM, too, in the girls 10 age group and finished at No. 39 out of 84 swimmers after completing the event in 1:27.95. In the 50m breaststroke, she was at No. 38 out of 130 participants after submitting 44 seconds.

All five missed making it to the finals where only the Top 8 qualified, but head coach Hiro Kimura is still proud of his swimmers.

"Tsunami swimmers showed their best performance. It was good to see them standing at the Tatsumi International Swimming Stadium. I am so proud of them and I know they will work harder next time to make it to the finals," Kimura said.

Meanwhile, Tsunami Saipan would like to thank the following for supporting their off-island competition: Coral Ocean Point, representatives Ray Tebuteb, Edmund Villagomez, B.J. Attao, Larry Guerrero, Tony Benavente, Lee Pan Guerrero, Ed Propst, Ralph Yumul, J.P. Sablan, and Angel Demapan, senators Sixto Igisomar, Justo Quitugua, Jude Hofschneider, and Arnold Palacios, Pacific Islands Club, Tasi Tours, Mariana Resort, Coca-Cola Saipna, Java Joe, Kinpachi, World Resort, Aqua Resort, and Hyatt Regency Saipan.

Dempsey to play for US at World Cup qualifying in Guatemala

MIAMI (AP) — Clint Dempsey is expected to play his first game with the U.S. since October when the national team plays a World Cup qualifying match Friday in Guatemala.

The 33-year-old Dempsey was left off the USA roster for two qualifying matches in November. Coach Jurgen Klinsmann cited the need to look at younger players.

"It's not really up to me," said Dempsey, in reference to not playing last fall. "It is and it isn't. It is in that you have to keep working hard and playing. But it's up to the coaching staff to make the decisions, and I'm happy to be a part of these important games."

The Americans could use his scoring touch. Dempsey has 48 goals while playing for the U.S., second in history behind the 57 scored by Landon Donovan. He's also the all-time leading scorer against Guatemala with five goals.

Dempsey last played for the national team on Oct. 10 in the Confederations Cup loss to Mexico.

Jozy Altidore has been slowed by an injury, so Klinsmann could pair Dempsey with forward Bobby Wood, a 23-year-old Hawaiian and prolific scorer on his German team FC Union Berlin.

Dempsey also might be used in the midfield. Either way, Dempsey will add a dangerous dynamic to the offense. He's added 13 goals in World Cup qualifiers -- tied with Donovan for the most in team history -- and Altidore has 12.

MANGLONA

From Page 28

down by Eclavea a couple of times and there was one point in the second round that the latter nearly stopped the former via rear-naked choke. However, Manglona knew how to get out of trouble in time as RNC is his specialty. Once he maneuvered out of Eclavea's hold and stood up, Manglona punished his foe with a string of body punches

At the end of the excruciating three-round bout, Manglona said it was too close to call although he thought he was up on points.

"Honestly, I don't know who was going to win because it was really a tough fight. When the ring announcer called my name, I was relieved. It was always great to win your first fight in any event," the Trench Tech bet said.

With his victory, Manglona improved his win-loss record to 4-1, prevailing in his last four fights. He debuted at the octagon cage on Dec. 13, 2013 and bowed to Josh Duenas via arm-bar submission at the 1:47 mark in the first round of their duel in Trench Warz 17: Night of Champions.

Manglona then started his series of victories on Aug. 22, 2014 after recording a RNC win against Ethan Reyes just 55 seconds into the opening round of their flyweight bout in Rites of Passage 17: Road to Glory. His two other triumphs were also via RNC against Paul Ayuyu and Ernie Santos. Manglona pulled the plug on Santos at the 3: 59 mark of their first round bout in Rites of Passage 18: Warpath last July 3, 2015, while versus Ayuyu, the former got the win in Round 3 (2:46) during Trench Warz 18: Rock and Rumble last Dec. 12, 2014.

After his fourth straight victory and debut win in Guam, Manglona received an invite to see action in future PXC events.

"I am excited and looking forward to more PXC fights. While waiting for another call-up from PXC, I will return to training and prepare for my next bout in April," the 19-year-old fighter said.

Manglona will be featured in one of the kickboxing matches in Rites of Passage 19: Seek and Destroy set for April 22 at the Royal Taga Hall of Saipan World Resort. Incidentally, he will face one of his victims—Reyes—in next month's event.

"I am thrilled for my rematch against Ethan and hopefully I will beat him again," Manglona said.

MATANSA

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Leon did the same in the 11th and 25th.

GIRLS U15
Matansa 7, Tan Holdings 1

Over at the San Antonio Middle School Field, Matansa cruised past Tan Holdings.

Matansa went all out in the second half, tallying five goals for the easy win. Janah Casarino sparked the breakaway with her back-to-back goals in the 36th and 39th minute, while Lyka Sally duplicated the feat, scoring in the 40th and 43rd. Leisha Sally nailed the last goal for Matansa in the 51st minute.

Catherine Barrozo earned the lone goal for Tan Holdings.

Shirley's 5, MP United 4

Shirley's avoided the upset axe of MP United after pulling off a come-from-behind win.

Jobelle Tabuena saved Shirley's day after hitting the go-ahead goal in the second half. The final frame started with Shirley's staring a 2-3 deficit. Jerlyn Castillo then made her first goal to equalize, but MP United got the lead back behind Gillian Villagomez's.

A goal from Jasmine Phan forced another deadlock, which Tabuena later broke with her lone goal in the match. Shirley's two goals in the first half came from Mia Carreon and MP United's error, while Villagomez had a hat-trick for the losing squad in the opening half.

CO-ED U12
Kanoa 6, MP United 4

Kanoa outclassed MP United in the lone co-ed U12 A division match at the Hopwood Junior High School Field.

Brian Lubao delivered the go-ahead goal, while Wayne Lizama made the insurance in the second half, which began with the opposing squads tied, 3-3.

Kanoa hit the board off an own goal in the first half and drew its next two from Lizama and Lubao. MP United, on the other hand, got two straight goals from Dulan Kim and one from Rintaro Miyawaki.

Merick Toves broke the tie in the 40th, 4-3, but another goal from Kim seven minutes later set the fourth standoff before Lubao and Lizama's goals secured the win for Kanoa.

The other game in the division was won by Tan Holdings after Paire failed to field enough players in last weekend's match.

SSC

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the 50m freestyle (43.63 seconds). She topped the 100m (1:39.03) and 200m freestyle (3:30.84), 50m backstroke (51.46 seconds), 50m (55.26 seconds) and 100m butterfly (2:04.60), and 200m individual medley (4:38.12).

Duplicating Chavez's first place finish in the tournament held from March 17 to 19 were fellow SSC members Jinnosuke and Lennosuke Suzuki, Kento Akimaru, and Caleb Wang.

Jinnosuke prevailed in the boys 9 to 10 age group after gathering 74 points. The younger Suzuki won over Tsunami Saipan's Isaiah Aleksenko and Anthony Camacho-Deleon Guerrero, who had a neck-and-neck battle for the second and third spots after earning 63 and 62 points, respectively.

Lennosuke had a 4-point win over Palau's Jericho Maido in the boys 11 to 12 age group with the former scoring 77 points versus the latter's 73. Tsunami Saipan's Nelson Batallones completed the podium finish after tallying 56 points.

In the 15 to 16 division, Akimaru was the runaway winner as his 81 markers bested the 62 of SSC teammate Christian Villacrusis. Palau's Keemo Kanai landed at third place after receiving 52 points.

In the 17-and-over division, there were a close fight between Wang and Tsunami Saipan's Takumi Sugie. Wang ended up finishing ahead of his rival after bagging 66 points. Sugie got 63 and was joined in the Top 3 by SSC's Salofi Welch, who recorded 56 points.

Meanwhile, Tsunami Saipan had four swimmers ruling their respective age groups, while Palau brought home three first place medals.

Aasish Dangol handed Tsunami Saipan its first high-point award after winning the boys U8 division. He gained 63 points to beat SSC's Dino Sato and Wataru Kadokura, who posted 51 and 43 markers, respectively.

Aasish's sister, Ashley, and Nanaka Watanabe gave Tsunami Saipan a 1-2 finish in the girls 9 to 10 age group after tallying 77 and 67 points. SSC's Jinie Thompson rounded out the Top 3 after recording 40 points.

In the girls 11 to 12, Tsunami also finished in the Top 2 with Sophia Gauran collecting 78 points to edge teammate Aika Watanabe, who had 72 markers. Pohnpei Swim Team's Kihleng Kestra and SSC's Coume Kaga were tied for third after getting 46 points each.

In the girls 13 to 14, Miku Tammy smoked her competition after registering 81 points. She won over SSC's Jinju Thompson (58 points) and fellow Tsunami Saipan swimmer Kathrine Illahi (21 points).

For the Palau side, the visitors had a 1-2 finish in the boys 13 to 14 with Noel Keane ruling the division after posting 79 points against the 75 of his teammate Malcolm Shae Gaymann. Tsunami Saipan's Mark Maestro settled for the third place honors with his 64 points.

Roylin Akiwo and Osisang Chilton gave Palau the two other first place medals with the former topping the 15 to 16 age group. Chilton, on the other hand, nipped Dirngulbai Misech for the top honors in the 17-and-over division, 73-72, while Tsunami Saipan's Angel De Jesus was ranked third after logging 67 points.

2016 XTERRA Saipan Winners

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

The women's pros pose with Miss Marianas Jian Joyner, left, during the awards ceremony for the 2016 XTERRA Saipan Championship held at Kanoa Resort last March 12. From left, Joyner, Carina Wasle, Mieko Carey, Renata Bucher, and Belinda Hadden.

From left, Butch Sublemente, Christian Villacrusis, and Taiga Sato pose with their third place medals in the men's relay division.

Mixed relay runners-up, from left, Rintaro Miyawaki, Jinju Thompson, and Wynn Brillo join Miss Marianas Jian Joyner, back row, for a group photo.

Overall winners (relay) Elijah Reyes Tydingco, Angel Marie Tan, and Jerome Diyco are all smiles after receiving their first place medals.

The finishers celebrate at the Kanoa Resort pool.

Saipan Swim Club's Caleb Wang, right, shows the XTERRA World qualifier certificate he got from organizers and presented by Miss Marianas Jian Joyner.

Tyce Mister shows his third place medal.

Saipan's Kimiko McKagan, center, and Guam's Michelle Santos, enjoy a light moment with Miss Marianas Jian Joyner after getting their XTERRA World qualifier certificates.

South Korean Kaon Cho joins Miss Marianas Jian Joyner for a photo after getting his fourth place medal.

LeBron's triple-double leads Cavs to division title

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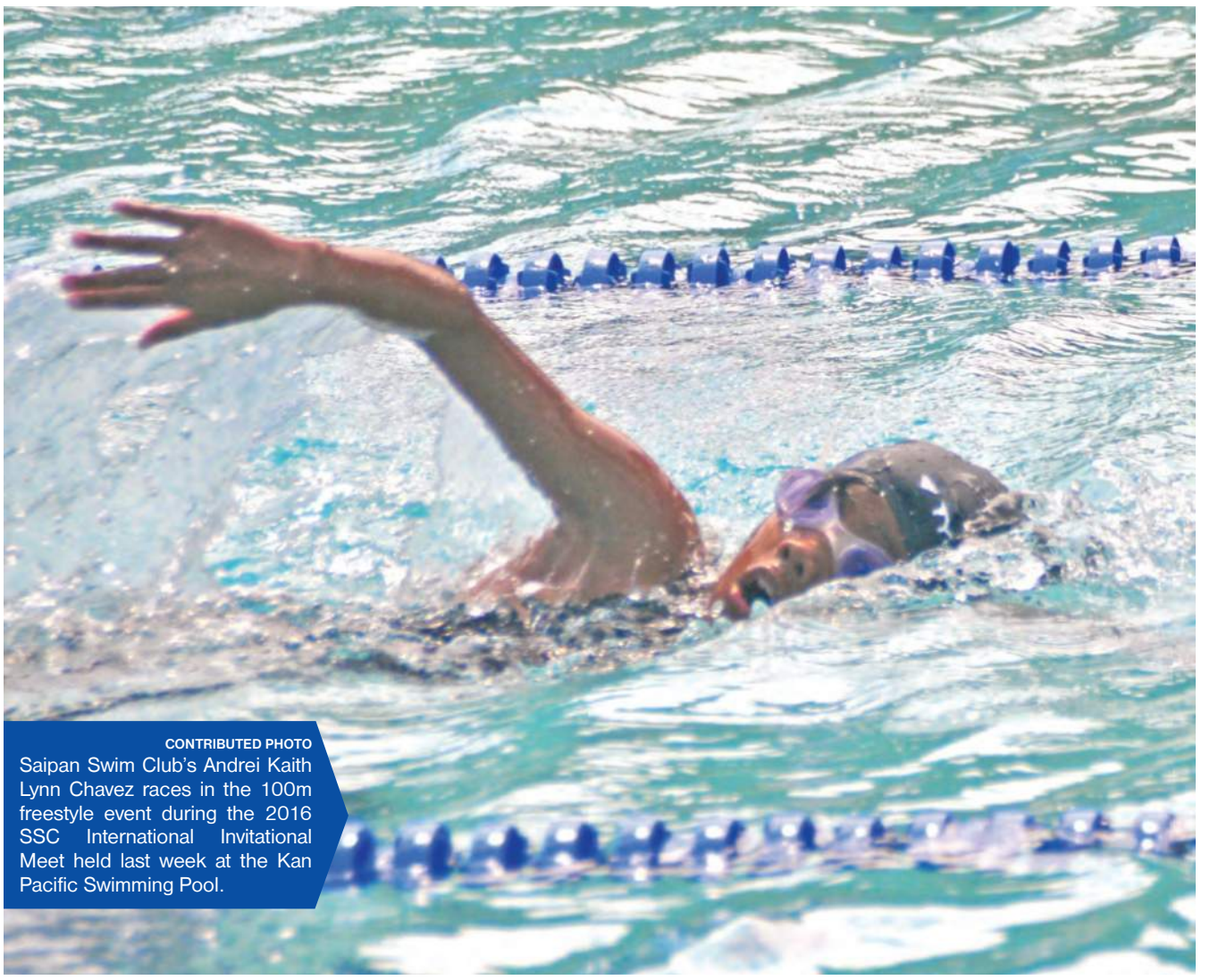
SSC members gain top honors



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Saipan Swim Club's Andrei Kaith Lynn Chavez races in the 100m freestyle event during the 2016 SSC International Invitational Meet held last week at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Five Saipan Swim Club standouts earned first place finishes in the 2016 Saipan Swim Club International Invitational Meet held last week at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

Up-and-comer Andrei Kaith Lynn Chavez led the list of SSC's high-point awardees after ruling the girls U8 age group, which featured five swimmers. She collected 61 points for a close win against Tsunami Saipan's Maria Batallones, who recorded 57 points. Savita Sikkel, also of SSC, rounded out the Top 3 after getting 26 markers.

The 8-year-old Chavez edged Batallones for the division championship after winning six events and recording a runner-up finish in

See SSC on Page 26

Matansa, MPU ease past opponents

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Matansa and MP United blanked their respective foes in the U17 division games in the 2016 NMIFA Youth Spring League last Saturday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

Matansa clobbered Paire in the first game, 8-0, while MP United shut down Tan Holdings, 3-0, in the second and final match last weekend.

Keeanu Diaz led MP United past Tan Holdings, as he knocked in a pair of goals in succession. His first came in the 42nd minute, while the second and last one was recorded in the 63rd. Joshua Abragan registered the other goal for MP United when he lit up the board in the 17th minute.

With the win, MP United now has a 4-0-1 win-draw-loss record to keep up with Matansa, which holds the same mark, but enjoys the top spot with its more goals than the former, 22-13.

Matansa added eight more goals to its total in five games after demolishing the hapless Paire (1-0-4). Jun Sik Kim scored three of those goals, while Terrence Evan Belcher and Joshua De Leon added two each, and Jether Yobech contributed one.

All of Matansa's goals were made in the first half with Yobech starting the goals rush in the sixth minute. Kim got his first in the 10th minute and then completed the hat-trick when he found the back of the net in the 16th and 31st. Belcher earned his two goals in the 13th and 40th, while De

See MATANSA on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
MP United's Clayton Izuka faces two Tan Holdings defenders during their boys U17 division game in the NMIFA youth league last Saturday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

Manglona delivers in PXC debut

PACIFIC XTREME COMBAT PHOTO
Trench Tech's Jordan "The Machine" Manglona is trapped by a rear-naked choke from Scott Eclavea during their flyweight bout in PXC 52 last Friday at the University of Guam Calvo Field House. Manglona managed to break free and beat Eclavea via split decision.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Trench Tech's Jordan "The Machine" Manglona made the grade in his Pacific Xtreme Combat debut after winning against Guam Muay Thai's Scott Eclavea in PXC 52 last Friday at the University of Guam Calvo Field House.

Manglona used his better stand-up fighting skills to pull off a split decision victory against Eclavea.

"My strategy was really to stay up on my feet because Scott is a known ground fighter. I trained and worked hard on my stand-up fighting skills for three months. I tried hard to get away from his hold and threw punches and kicks," said Manglona, who appeared in several kickboxing bouts on Saipan before making his first MMA appearance in PXC.

The flyweight was pinned

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